THE HALCYON

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE THOMAS FISHER RARE BOOK LIBRARY

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With Gratitude to Friends, Past and Present

This winter issue of *The Halcyon* celebrates a tradition at the heart of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library: the extraordinary generosity of our community. Each year, the Fisher Library grows through the thoughtful donations of Friends who believe in the enduring value of books, archives, and other rare materials. In this season of reflection, we turn our attention to the remarkable gifts-in-kind that sustain our collections and deepen our shared commitment to research, learning, teaching, and discovery.

In this season's *Halcyon*, we are excited to share stories that highlight the rich and diverse donations that strengthen our holdings. Grant Hurley introduces three significant new additions to the General James Wolfe Collection, while Andrew Stewart explores a generous gift of late-nineteenth-century English-language Japanese fairy-tale books. Erez Zobary reflects on processing the recently donated archival papers of Toronto author Shirley Faessler and on the meaningful personal connection they sparked. Nadav Sharon highlights a notable Judaica donation from the Hyman family, and David Fernández explores exceptional exhibitions organized by RBSC staff. Cameron Findlay reports on an anonymous donation from the personal collection of Sybille Pantazzi that beautifully complements our existing Pantazzi holdings, and Alexandra Carter reflects on the library's Science Literacy Week Open House, alongside a recently acquired herbal. Rachel Di Cresce explains the principles of Book Science, and Lale Javanshir highlights a major donation of materials documenting the Iranian Left. Natalya Rattan and Leora Bromberg showcase some remarkable selections from recently processed gifts-in-kind now accessible to readers and visitors.

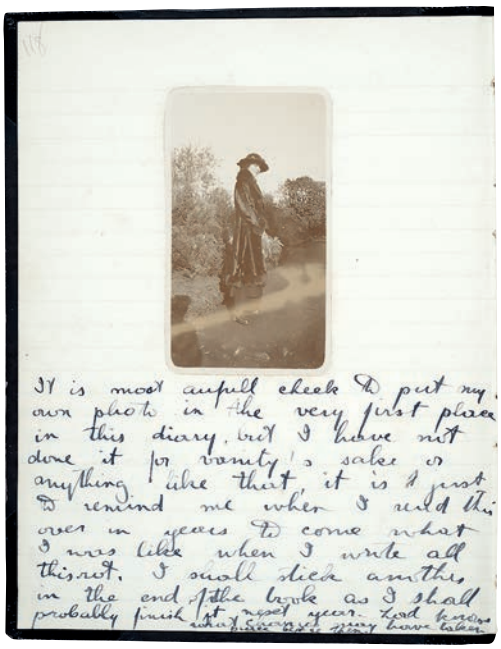
As we celebrate these acts of giving, we also pause to honour three Friends of the Fisher Library who passed away recently: Dorene Seltzer, William ('Bill') Blissett, and Thomas Schweitzer. Mrs. Seltzer and her family supported the John Seltzer and Mark Seltzer Memorial Lecture series, which has brought many interesting speakers to Toronto and marked its twenty-seventh year on 27 November. Professor Blissett's unparalleled collection of material related to the writer David Jones featured in the memorable exhibition he and Alan Horne curated here at the Fisher remains a testament to his lifelong devotion to literature and the library. Tom's generous donations included materials related to the typographer and book designer Bruce Rogers, which inspired a 2007 exhibition devoted to Rogers' works, as well as Canadian private presses the Aliquando Press and Locks' Press, have enriched the Fisher immeasurably.

This *Halcyon* issue is dedicated to celebrating the spirit of giving, so fully exemplified by Dorene, Bill, Tom, and our generous donors, and to sharing the many ways in which our Friends ensure that rare and extraordinary materials remain accessible to future generations.

Happy reading!

Loryl MacDonald
Associate Chief Librarian for
Special Collections and Director,
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

COVER: Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll, paper engineering by Vojtěch Kubašta, London : Bancroft & Co.; [196-?] on display in 70 Rare Books, Special Collections, Archives: An Anniversary Exhibition 1955-2025. Article on page 12.


It is most awfull cheek to put my own photo in the very first place in this diary, but I have not done it for vanity's sake or anything like that, it is just to remind me when I read this over in years to come what I was like when I write all this out. I shall stick another in the end of the book as I shall probably finish it next year. God knows what I shall have taken

From Donors to Discovery: Selections from Recently Processed Gifts-in-Kind

Behind every new addition to the Fisher Library's holdings is a chain of stewardship, with materials passing from creators or collectors to the care of our staff, past and present. In our roles as Archivist and Acquisitions Specialist, we work together to coordinate the intake, documentation, and processing of the bulk of the materials that join the collections. One of the most rewarding aspects of our work as a department centres around building lasting relationships with donors and learning more about their work, collecting interests, and areas of expertise. These connections help us understand the stories and contexts behind the materials we receive, shaping how we describe, preserve, and share them with researchers, students, faculty, and the broader community.

Since January 2024, the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections has transferred and described over six thousand volumes and processed 260 boxes (adding up to ninety-seven metres) and counting of archival materials acquired through gifts-in-kind. Representing over one hundred individual donations, these materials speak to the generosity and reach of our community.

The following selections showcase recently processed and accessible materials along with contributions from new donors, inviting readers to explore how these additions complement the library's subject strengths and our researchers.

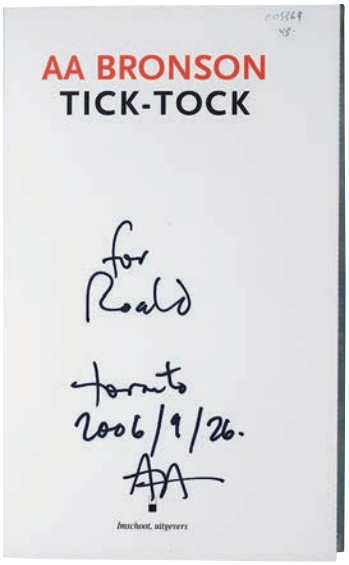
Travel Narratives

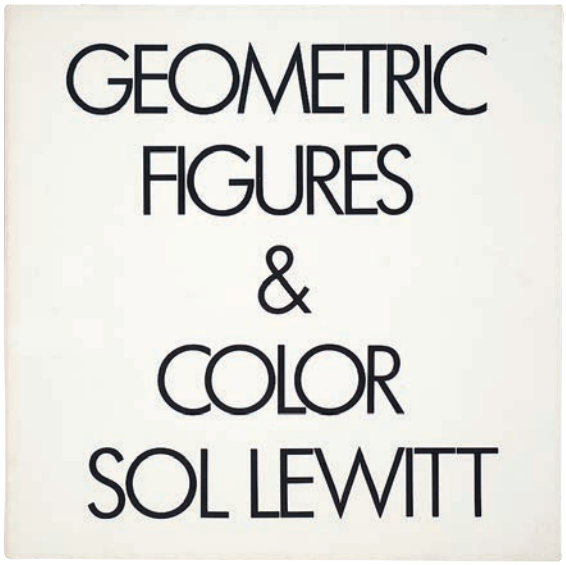
Accounts of travel and exploration feature prominently across recent acquisitions. The diaries of Essie Bowe Tomlin (1896–1969) were a timely donation from her granddaughter **Wendy Bonus**, complementing the fall 2024 exhibition *Women on the Move*. Tomlin's diaries document her experiences as a young Englishwoman living in Moscow with her family before the First World War, and their return to England as tensions escalated. Primary accounts such as these, offering insight into the lives of ordinary people, are valuable additions to our manuscript holdings. While many of Tomlin's entries—including recipes, beauty remedies, romantic musings, and keepsakes such as newspaper clippings and dance cards—reflect the everyday interests of young middle-class women of the period, her travel anecdotes and unusually playful photographs, set against the backdrop of the War, foreground a unique lived experience from a woman's perspective that invites further investigation.

The Book Arts

Some incoming materials reflect the vibrancy of our local book arts scene. **Roald Nasgaard** and **Lori J. Walters**' gift of artists' books and posters broadened our collections, with influential voices in conceptual art including Canadian artists such as AA Bronson, Garry Neill Kennedy (1935–2021), Michael Snow (1929–2023), Ian Baxter, and Carole Condé (1940–2024), alongside international figures including Lawrence Weiner (1942–2021), Dieter Roth (1930–1998), Joseph Beuys (1921–1986), Sol LeWitt (1928–2007), and many more. These artists all pushed the boundaries of form and tradition to explore new ways of contemplating, creating, and experiencing

LEFT TO RIGHT: Essie Bowe Tomlin's photo album, c. 1915–1917. Photograph captioned 'Study of a British officer at work' (MSS 08023, item 4). • Verso front flyleaf of journal, with pasted-in photograph of Essie Bowe Tomlin, c. 1916. (MSS 08023, journal 3).





art. The timing of this donation was especially fitting, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary in 2024 of Toronto's Art Metropole—a non-profit artist organization, publisher, and bookstore founded by AA Bronson and his artist collective General Idea.

Print Culture

In recent years, donations from local printmakers have enriched our collections and created opportunities for artists to engage with the library. In addition to archival collections from local relief printers and book artists including **Rosemary Kilbourn** (1931–2025), **Alan Stein** (Church Street Press), **George Walker**, **Walter** and **Janis Bachinski** (Shanty Bay Press), and **Michael Torosian** (Lumiere Press), intaglio prints from Toronto-based artists **George Hawken** (1946–2016) and **Maurice Vellekoop** joined the library's holdings. Hawken was an intaglio printmaker and professor emeritus at the University of Toronto known for his portraiture and his metamorphosis series (1982) inspired by Kafka's novella. The material contributed by Hawken and his family includes proofs and original copper plates. Providing access to process materials such as these offers print history and printmaking students valuable hands-on insight into intaglio techniques. Though Maurice Vellekoop is best known for his cartoons

FIRST ROW: Bronson, AA. *AA Bronson: Tick-tock.* Gent: Imschoot, uitgevers, c. 2006. Author's presentation copy addressed to Roald [Nasgaard], 2006/9/26. B-14 01602. • Front and back cover of Sol LeWitt's *Geometric Figures & Color* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979) B-14 01541. **SECOND ROW:** Hawken, George. 'S. P. in Scarborough (p.)' V State. Self-portrait. 50 x 56 cm. 27 Jan 1984. MS Coll. 00589A, mapcase folder 2. • Vellekoop, Maurice. 'The prodigal's return.' Toronto: Maurice Vellekoop, 1985. Mapc01047. **THIRD ROW:** *Guerilla* [journal]. Volume 1, No. 6: August 17, 1970. Gift of Charles Edward Cassity, 2023. • *Cabal.* Toronto; 1972. Year 1, No. 2: February 1, 1972. Gift of Charles Edward Cassity, 2023. **FACING PAGE:** Selection of ephemera from Charles Cassity papers including a photograph of Cassity, Charasee Press Inc. card, Toronto Typographical Union card, Rochdale bookplate, and printed matchbox. Rochdale College Collection, MS Coll. 184, Box 26. • Saville, Miriam. Holograph MS notebook: 'I Wanted to Be a Nurse.' Miriam Saville Papers, MS Coll. 93A, Box 1.

on LGBTQ themes, the library also holds several of his early drypoint etchings. Printed during his studies at the Ontario College of Art (now OCAD U) in the mid-1980s, the etchings reveal Vellekoop's early experimentation, techniques, and emerging bold style. Earlier this year, he delivered the Johanna and Leon Katz Memorial Lecture on his award-winning graphic memoir *I'm So Glad We Had This Time Together* (2024), and a full recording of this lecture is available on the Fisher Library's YouTube channel. As with other recent outreach initiatives, this event illustrated the meaningful connections that can emerge when artists and new communities engage with the library's collections.

Local History

The library often hosts sessions for classes exploring Toronto history, giving students the chance to engage with print and archival materials that document the city's cultural institutions, past and present. One landmark we often revisit is Rochdale College, which functioned as a co-operative residence and experimental 'free university' between 1968–1975 at 341 Bloor Street West. A new accession was recently added to the Fisher's Rochdale College Collection from a former head of its Education Council (EDCON), **Charles 'Chuck' Edward Cassity** (1948–2023). His generous donation, via **Gina L. 'Nickie' Reid**, includes various Rochdale College publications, pamphlets and periodicals, Education Council meeting minutes, printed ephemera, copies of Toronto underground newspapers *Guerilla* and *Cabal*, and material relating to his work at Brian Grieveson's Charasee Press.

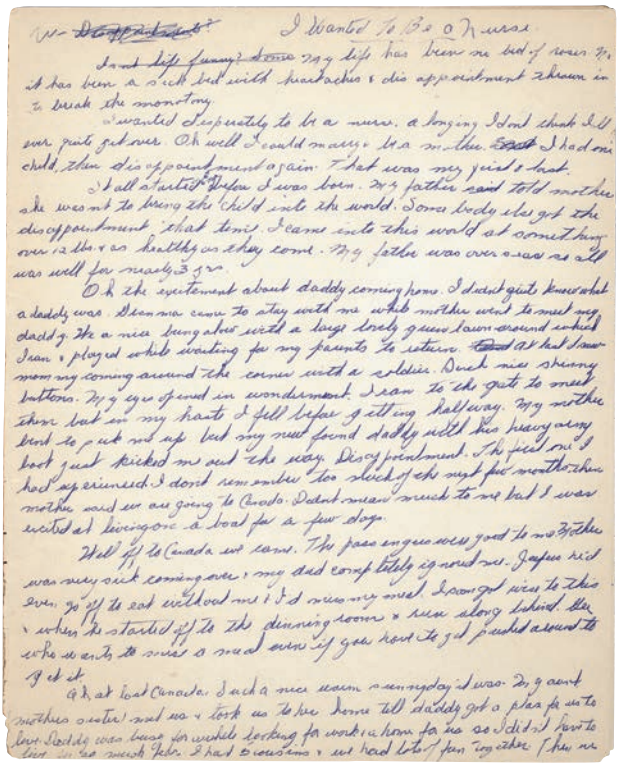
Science and Medicine

The archives of Frederick G. Banting (1891–1941) and Charles Best (1899–1978) that document the discovery and early development of insulin are among the library's most consulted materials, frequently used in teaching, research, publications, and in the media. In the last few years, there has been increasing research interest in records of the first diabetic patients treated with insulin, which offer valuable insight into the experiences of diabetics in the early twentieth century.

Related to these collections, the Fisher recently received an unpublished handwritten manuscript in two journals drafted by **Miriam Saville** (1916–1969), documenting her experience as a diabetic beginning in the 1920s, a few years after the discovery of insulin. Titled 'I Wanted to Be a Nurse,' the manuscript was transcribed and donated by her nieces, Janet Cartwright and Catherine Caufield. Diagnosed and treated by Dr. Charles Best around age fourteen, Saville recounts a dramatic episode in which, after a long period of illness, she collapsed and fell unconscious. 'Of course, diabetes wasn't easily recognized in those days,' she later wrote. It was only when 'Dr. Charles' (Best) heard of her case and visited her in the hospital that the diagnosis became clear. Saville's manuscript offers a first-hand account of the daily life of a young diabetic in the early years of insulin treatment, describing both the physical challenges and the social stigma associated with the disease at the time. Though marked by struggle and illness, her story contributes another important patient perspective to the library's insulin collections.

Literary Papers

In 2024, the library processed donations from eighteen writers, including four new donations (listed in detail below), as well as accruals to existing collections. We received accruals to the papers of **M.R. Appell** (from **Douglas Henderson**), **Jack Batten**, **Mary Burns**, **Barry Callaghan**, **George Elliott Clarke**, **Kyo Maclear**, **Linda McKnight**, **K.D. Miller**, **Robert Priest**, **Beverley Slopen**, **Raymond Souster** (from



Donna Dunlop), **Bruce Whiteman**, and donations of writers' correspondence from **Shel Krakofsky** and **Tom Christie**.

Recent Additions to the Fisher Library's Collections of Writers' Papers

Poet, translator, editor, and librarian **Beatriz Hausner** made her first donation to the Fisher Library this year. Hausner was born in Chile and immigrated to Toronto in 1971. She has published several poetry collections, including *Sew Him Up* (2010), *Enter the Raccoon* (2012), *Beloved Revolutionary Sweetheart* (2020), and *She Who Lies Above* (2023), as well as several limited-edition chapbooks. Her poetry has been translated into multiple languages, including Spanish, French, Dutch, and Greek. She is an active participant in the international surrealist movement, and historian and translator of surrealism in Latin America.

This donation focuses on her poetry, writing, editorial work, and work as a librarian. It includes manuscripts, correspondence, and promotional material related to recent publications, in addition to some of her earliest works and notebooks from high school. The collection also includes correspondence with her parents, artist Susana Wald and poet Ludwig Zeller (1927–2019), who have both greatly influenced her work, as well as with other writers and surrealist artists. In addition, the donation contains files relating to her editorial work for Quattro Books, Someone Editions, *ellipse*, *The Philosophical Egg/The Egg*, *Exile Quarterly*, and others.

György (George) Faludy (1910–2006) was a Hungarian poet, writer, and translator, born in Budapest. He began publishing in the early 1930s and achieved renown for his adaptations of François Villon (1431–1463). After leaving Hungary in 1938, Faludy lived in Paris, Morocco, and the United States, and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He returned to Hungary in 1946 and was imprisoned in the Recsk labour camp under the Communist regime. Following the 1956 revolution, he fled again and settled in Toronto, where he taught courses in European literature, the Renaissance, and humanism, both in Canada and the U.S. In 1978, he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Toronto. Faludy returned to Hungary in 1989, after over thirty years in exile. He was later honoured with the Order of the Flag of the Republic of Hungary (1990) and the Kossuth Prize (1994), Hungary's most prestigious literary award.

Faludy's archives, comprised of twenty-five boxes, were donated to the library by

ABOVE: Photograph of Beatriz Hausner and Ludwig Zeller at Toronto Reference Library. Beatriz Hausner Papers, MS Coll. 296B, Box 16, Folder 1. **FACING PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Portrait of György Faludy by Isaac Bickerstaff [1983]. György Faludy Papers, Box 20. • Poster: George Faludy, A Celebration. Includes calligram paper cut-out by Ludwig Zeller. Beatriz Hausner Papers, MS Coll. 296B, Box 16, Folder 1.

his friend Jacqueline d'Amboise, a poet and literary translator, whom he met while living in Toronto. The collection includes manuscripts for his Hungarian works, such as *Pokolbeli víg napjaim* (*My Happy Days in Hell*,1962), *Test és lélek* (*Body and Soul*, 1988), and *François Villon balladái* (*Ballads of François Villon*, 1937), as well as his English works, including *East and West: Selected Poems of George Faludy* (1978), among other published and unpublished materials. The donation also features extensive correspondence in Hungarian, English, French, and German. These papers offer a rich resource on Faludy's life and literary legacy.

Joseph Mark Glazner is an American-Canadian memoirist, crime novelist, and chronicler of 1960s counterculture. He is the author of four memoirs on the counterculture era, including *Life After America: A Memoir About the Wild and Crazy 1960s* (2017), *California 1963–1967: Spaceship Earth* (2022), and *When War Is Over 1969–1975* (2023), and eight crime novels, including *Smart Money Doesn't Sing or Dance* (1979) and *Madelaine* (1987), written under his pen name, Joseph Louis, which was nominated for both a Shamus Award (U.S.) and the Crime Writers of Canada's best novel award.

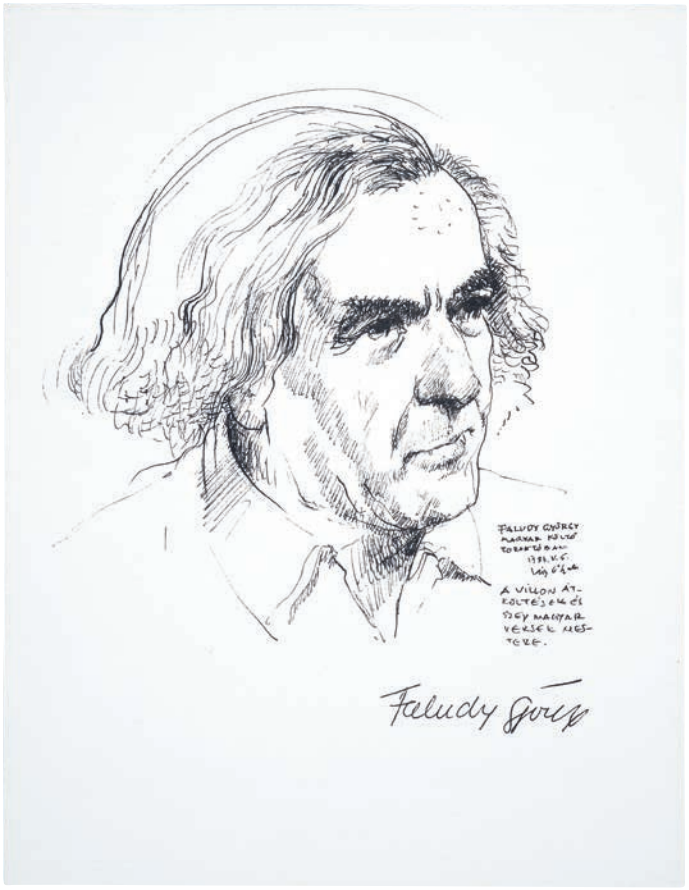
In 1967, during the early years of the Vietnam War, Glazner left the U.S. for Montreal. During this time, he met John Lennon and documented his and Yoko Ono's 1969 'Bed-In for Peace' in his article, 'Seven Days in Bed with a Beatle' for *Cavalier* magazine (November 1969, vol. 20, no. 1).

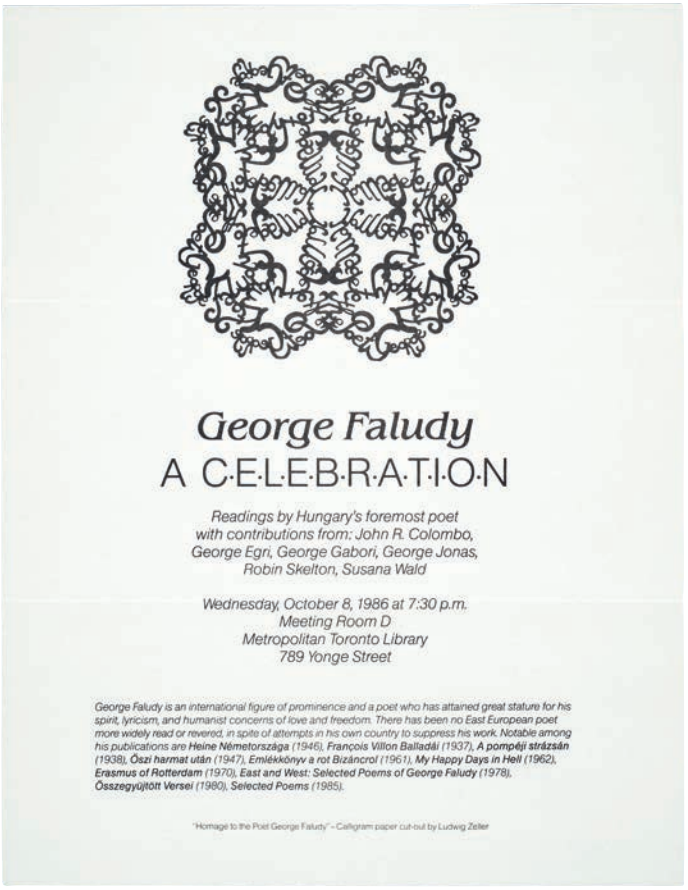
Glazner's archives include manuscripts, letters, photographs, ephemera, and mementos, much of it relating to early North American counterculture, the anti-Vietnam War movement, and U.S. postwar history through the 1960s. This material will be a good resource for researchers interested in 1960s counterculture, migration, and anti-war activism, complementing the library's collections on social and political movements.

The Fisher Library recently received the first donation of **Paul Quarrington**'s archives from **Dorothy Bennie**. Paul Quarrington (1953–2010) was an acclaimed Canadian novelist, screenwriter, playwright, and musician. Over his career, he authored ten novels, seven works of non-fiction, numerous scripts and stage plays, and contributed work to newspapers and magazines. He received several awards for his work, including the Governor General's Award for *Whale Music* (1989), the Stephen Leacock Award and a CBC Canada Reads competition win for *King Leary* (1987), a Genie Award for *Perfectly Normal* (1990), and the Matt Cohen Award by the Writers' Trust of Canada for his contributions to Canadian literature.

This donation of forty-four boxes contains a comprehensive record of Paul Quarrington's creative process and career as a novelist, screenwriter, and musician. It consists of drafts of novels, non-fiction works, plays, screenplays, and short stories, along with related notes and research materials; correspondence; music-related materials including lyrics and sheet music, and audiovisual and digital media related to his writing and music projects, including material from the documentary *Paul Quarrington: Life in Music*.

All of these newly processed donations further enhance the library's strengths in




George Faludy
A C·E·L·E·B·R·A·T·I·O·N
Readings by Hungary's foremost poet
with contributions from: John R. Colombo,
George Egri, George Gabori, George Jonas,
Robin Skelton, Susana Wald
Wednesday, October 8, 1986 at 7:30 p.m.
Meeting Room D
Metropolitan Toronto Library
789 Yonge Street
George Faludy is an international figure of prominence and a poet who has attained great stature for his spirit, lyricism, and humanist concerns of love and freedom. There has been no East European poet more widely read or revered, in spite of attempts in his own country to suppress his work. Notable among his publications are Heine Németországa (1946), François Villon Balladái (1937), A pompéji strázsán (1938), Őszi harmat után (1947), Emlékkönyv a rot Bizáncrol (1961), My Happy Days in Hell (1962), Erasmus of Rotterdam (1970), East and West: Selected Poems of George Faludy (1978), Összegyüjtött Versei (1980), Selected Poems (1985).
"Homage to the Poet George Faludy" - Calligram paper cut-out by Ludwig Zeller

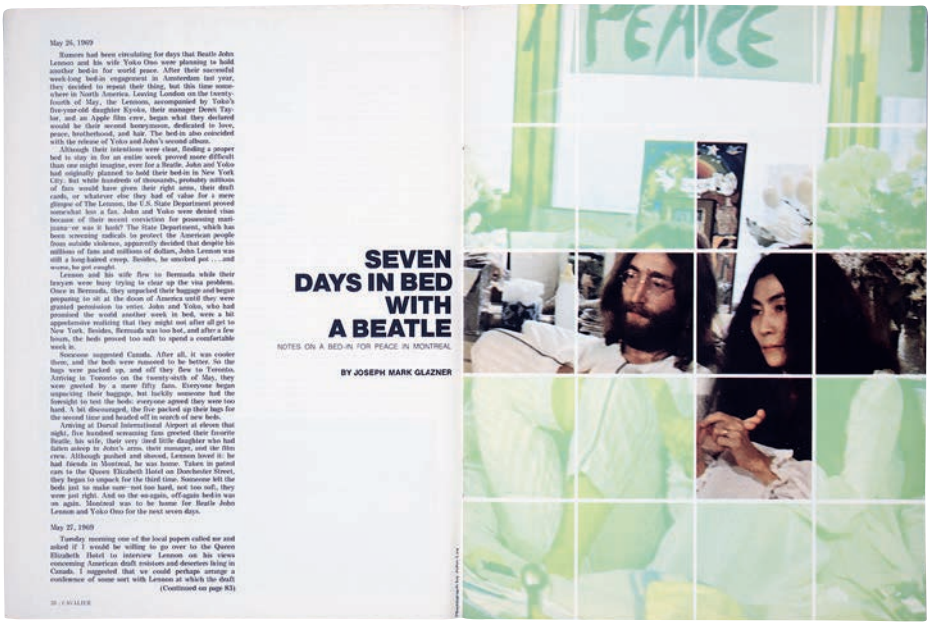
TOP TO BOTTOM: Photograph: John Lennon and Yoko Ono at the Bed-In on May 29, 1969. Also pictured is an American war resister named Grant and his baby, Janis, on the bed. Photographer: John Ley, American-Canadian photographer who accompanied Joseph Mark Glazner to the Bed-In. Joseph Mark Glazner Papers, MS Coll. 383A, Box 8, Folder 24. Glazner, Joseph. • 'Seven Days in Bed with a Beatle' [article]. *Cavalier* Magazine, November 1969, vol. 20, no. 1.

Canadian poetry and fiction, translation, surrealism, diasporic writing, Latin American studies, and countercultural history.

Processing, creating finding aids, cataloguing, and preparing incoming materials to be shelf-ready and accessible for research, teaching, and display is a collective effort across the department. We are grateful for the work of our colleague Andrew Stewart, as well as the archival and gift-processing graduate students who assisted with projects featured in this article, including Catherine Cassels, Benedek Gulyas, Cameron Finlay, Bethany Lepp, and Zoe Mack.

Leora Bromberg
Acquisitions Specialist
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

Natalya Rattan
Archivist
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library



May 26, 1969

Rumors had been circulating for days that Beatle John Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono were planning to hold another bed-in for world peace. After their successful week-long bed-in engagement in Amsterdam last year, they decided to repeat their thing, but this time somewhere in North America. Leaving London on the twenty-fourth of May, the Lennons, accompanied by Yoko's five-year-old daughter Kyoko, their manager Denis Taylor, and an Apple film crew, began what they declared would be their second honeymoon, dedicated to love, peace, brotherhood, and hair. The bed-in also coincided with the release of Yoko and John's second album.

Although their intentions were clear, finding a proper bed to stay in for an entire week proved more difficult than one might imagine, even for a Beatle. John and Yoko had originally planned to hold their bed-in in New York City, but while hundreds of thousands, probably millions of fans would have given their right arms, their draft cards, or whatever else they had of value for a mere glimpse of The Lennons, the U.S. State Department proved somewhat less a fan. John and Yoko were denied visas because of their recent conviction for possessing marijuana—or was it hash? The State Department, which has been screening radicals to protect the American people from outside violence, apparently decided that despite his millions of fans and millions of dollars, John Lennon was still a long-haired creep. Besides, he smoked pot . . . and worse, he got caught.

Lennon and his wife flew to Bermuda while their lawyers were busy trying to clear up the visa problem. Once in Bermuda, they unpacked their baggage and began preparing to sit at the doom of America until they were granted permission to enter. John and Yoko, who had promised the world another week in bed, were a bit apprehensive realizing that they might not after all get to New York. Besides, Bermuda was too hot, and after a few hours, the beds proved too soft to spend a comfortable week in.

Someone suggested Canada. After all, it was cooler there, and the beds were rumored to be better. So the bags were packed up, and off they flew to Toronto. Arriving in Toronto on the twenty-sixth of May, they were greeted by a mere fifty fans. Everyone began unpacking their baggage, but luckily someone had the foresight to test the beds: everyone agreed they were too hard. A bit discouraged, the five packed up their bags for the second time and headed off in search of new beds.

Arriving at Dorval International Airport at eleven that night, five hundred screaming fans greeted their favorite Beatle, his wife, their very tired little daughter who had fallen asleep in John's arms, their manager, and the film crew. Although pushed and shoved, Lennon loved it: he had friends in Montreal, he was home. Taken in patiently to the Queen Elizabeth Hotel on Dorchester Street, they began to unpack for the third time. Someone felt the beds just to make sure—not too hard, not too soft, they were just right. And so the on-again, off-again bed-in was on again. Montreal was to be home for Beatle John Lennon and Yoko Ono for the next seven days.

May 27, 1969

Tuesday morning one of the local papers called me and asked if I would be willing to go over to the Queen Elizabeth Hotel to interview Lennon on his views concerning American draft resisters and deserters living in Canada. I suggested that we could perhaps arrange a conference of some sort with Lennon at which the draft

(Continued on page 83)

30 / CAVALIER

PEACE

SEVEN DAYS IN BED WITH A BEATLE

NOTES ON A BED-IN FOR PEACE IN MONTREAL

BY JOSEPH MARK GLAZNER

‘The Fifty-Cent Queen’: The Personal Collection of Sybille Pantazzi

The spirit and career of one of Canada’s foremost bibliophiles are reflected in an anonymous gift to the Fisher Library earlier this year.

Sybille Pantazzi (1914–1983) was a voracious book collector and remarkable personality. During her thirty-year career as Chief Librarian for the Art Gallery of Ontario, the library’s collection grew to a staggering twenty-five thousand volumes and enabled pioneering research into Victorian and Edwardian bookbinding practices.[1] In his brief sketch of Pantazzi’s life, librarian and avid ephemera collector Alan Suddon (1924–2000) quipped that, despite her literary prowess, ‘she was anything but bookish... she could bring a compelling combination of fire and ice to make high drama of ordinary social occasions and public encounters.’[2] Affectionately dubbed ‘the fifty-cent queen’ by those in the local book community for her talent for finding underpriced treasures, Pantazzi developed both her personal and professional collections with skill and charm.

In 1985, shortly after her death, Toronto bookseller Hugh Anson-Cartwright published a catalogue entitled *Victorian & Edwardian Illustrated Books and Decorative Bindings from the Collection of Sybille Pantazzi*. The volume not only listed her extensive collection of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century bindings for sale but also made a point to paint Pantazzi as a beloved character in the Canadian book scene. Her work lives on at the AGO and the Fisher Library, the latter where much of her personal collection of book jackets was donated in the 1980s. Visitors can share in Pantazzi’s fascination with the artistry of Victorian book design by viewing her extensive collection of signed English publishers’ bindings and book jackets, including the work of notable artists A. W. Warren and John Leighton.

The anonymous gift containing additional titles from Pantazzi’s personal library gives patrons a further glimpse into her remarkable book collection. The titles vary widely, from travel handbooks to publishers’ catalogues and books on print history, positioning her as a prodigious collector of Victorian and otherwise ‘antiquated’ books during a time when such collecting was no longer fashionable. Her foresight to preserve these materials, and the generosity of our anonymous donor, have thus continued Pantazzi’s desired goal more than forty years after her death: to share the artistry and ingenuity of these books with the public.

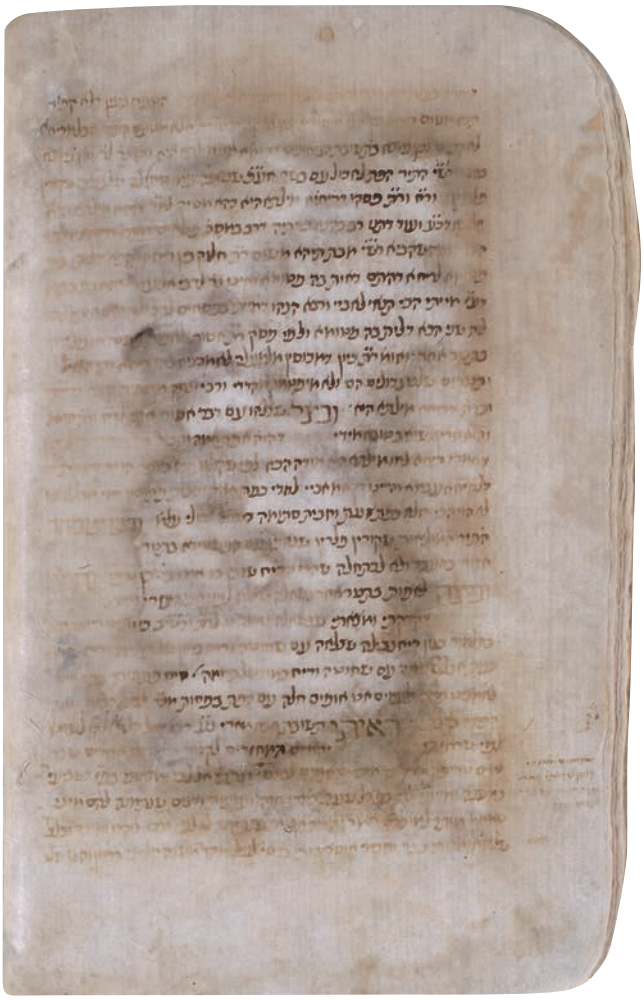
Cameron Findlay
Graduate Student
Library Assistant, Gifts in Kind
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

LEFT TO RIGHT: Original artwork for the Anson-Cartwright catalogue *Victorian & Edwardian Illustrated Books and Decorative Bindings from the Collection of Sybille Pantazzi.* Gift of Hugh-Anson Cartwright, 2025. • Cover art for Gregorio Martinez Sierra’s book *Eduardo Rosales,* c. 1923, from the personal collection of Sybille Pantazzi. Anonymous gift, 2025.

ENDNOTES

1 Hugh Anson-Cartwright, *Victorian & Edwardian Illustrated Books and Decorative Bindings from the Collection of Sybille Pantazzi* (Toronto: Anson-Cartwright Books, 1985).

2 Stephen C. McNeil, “Who Was Who: Biographies of Canadian Art Librarians,” in *Essays in the History of Art Librarianship in Canada* (ARLIS Canada, 2006), https://www.gallery.ca/sites/default/files/upload/library/2006_arlisna_historycanadaartlibraries_bilingual.pdf.



An Update on Book Science and Special Collections

What do a waterlogged fifteenth-century Hebrew manuscript, an intricately decorated seventeenth- to nineteenth-century Sanskrit manuscript from Kashmir, and a late seventeenth- to early eighteenth-century Techialoyan Codex from Mexico have in common? At the Fisher Library, these items are the latest subjects for analysis in the developing field of 'book science.'

Book science is an umbrella term referring to the application of various scientific techniques to the study of books and other written artefacts. Multidisciplinary in nature, book science cuts across many fields including imaging, chemistry, forensics, and data science. In collaboration with scholars at the University of Toronto and the Andrews Project for Book Science, the team at the Fisher Library is using various analytical techniques to better understand these materials.

She'elot u-teshuvot is a copy of *Responsa,* the answers to legal questions by the prominent thirteenth-century rabbi Meir ben Barukh (also known as Maharam of Rothenburg). His work has been reprinted in multiple editions; however, a manuscript copy held at Fisher Library offers the opportunity to uncover the original text. At some point in its history, the manuscript suffered severe water damage, heavily obscuring its text. With irreversible damage rendering it illegible, and where traditional means of repairing damaged texts have fallen short, multispectral imaging has succeeded. The manuscript was scanned using the library's MISHA (Multispectral Imaging System for Historical Artefacts) machine. The machine takes images of the manuscript at sixteen wavelengths of light, which are then processed using the MISHA software to recover the lost text.

A seventeenth- to nineteenth-century manuscript copy of Bhagavad Gita (trans. 'God's Song') from the Kashmir Valley is in a cloth covering, and is a wonderful example of cross-cultural exchange between Persian and South Asian cultures during this time. When it was originally scanned in 2020, it was the first Sanskrit paper codex to ever be scanned using X-ray microtomography (micro-CT),

FACING PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Folio 19v from the *She'elot u-teshuvot* showing extensive damage. • Multi-spectral pseudocolour image of f.19v which reveals the damaged text. (created by Stephanie J. Lahey, Lexi Atiya) **THIS PAGE, FIRST ROW:** A beautiful illustration of an episode in the lives of Vishnu's incarnations from Bhagavad Gita. • A micro-CT image of the book showing a flap covering invisible to the eye indicating the cloth extends around the entire cover and is Indian mashu fabric from Gujarat. **SECOND ROW:** Front page of the Techialoyan codex showing fibrous nature of the page. • Image of thread from the manuscript under colour transmitted light, revealing the helicoidal ornamentation typical of *amatl*.

a non-destructive means of looking at hidden binding structures. The scans revealed a pentagonal book-binding flap, typical of some Islamic and Arabic texts, whereas the left-to-right format is similar to earlier birchbark Sanskrit manuscripts. The Bhagavad Gita is truly a blend of cultural and artistic practices from content (Sanskrit text and structure and Hindu iconography) to material (Islamic burnished paper and Indian textiles), and structure (Islamics style binding).

The Techialoyan codex *Axoloapan Xoloctlan* is a colonial period Aztec illustrated codex written in the Nahuatl language. Due to colonizer's commitment to the erasure of Indigenous cultures, few examples of manuscripts from pre-colonial contact survive. The Techialoyan codices, among others from the period, share many similarities with earlier bookmaking traditions. The *Axoloapan Xoloctlan* documents land ownership of Indigenous caretakers in Mexico, and would have been used to assert land claims in court against the Spanish in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To learn more about the construction of this manuscript, researchers looked at fibre samples under a microscope and monochromatic camera to study their structure. In this way, they were able to confirm the paper is from the Ficus genus of tree and therefore copied on *amatl*, a type of bark paper that has been manufactured in Mexico for centuries.

These preliminary book science projects demonstrate new ways of learning and teaching in this quickly growing field, and its possible impact on the library. Stay tuned for future learning opportunities in the library as we continue to explore the potential of book science, including workshops and tours.

Rachel Di Cresce
Special Collections Librarian for Book Science, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

Exhibitions in Rare Books and Special Collections

On 16 October 2025, Friends of the Fisher and library colleagues came together to celebrate the opening of *70 Rare Books, Special Collections, Archives: An Anniversary Exhibition 1955-2025*. Exhibition openings are joyful occasions that recognize the value of collaboration in the library and celebrate the end of a period of intense work in mounting the exhibition and publishing its catalogue. The opening of the exhibition also marked the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at the University of Toronto.

Founded in 1955, the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections (RBSC) serves as the unit responsible for providing library services and public access to the largest holdings of archives, rare books, and special collections at the University of Toronto. Over the past seven decades, RBSC staff have organized over three hundred displays and exhibitions, featuring a wide range of subjects and periods inspired by these extensive and varied collections. Once a display or exhibition is taken down and the materials go back to the library stacks, the catalogue takes its place as valuable resource for future generations engaging with rare books and special collections.

The first exhibition organized by the department marked the opening of the Rare Book Room in 1957. The exhibitions mounted between 1957 and 1972 document the rapid growth of some of the department's core collecting areas, including European and Canadian history and literature, history of science and medicine, philosophy, politics, theology, and book history and print cultures. Most catalogues during this period consist of lists produced by RBSC staff, with some notable publications issued in collaboration with the University of Toronto Library.

A new exhibition period began when the department moved to the newly built Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the end of 1972. Each exhibition and catalogue contributes new knowledge about special collections, and advances the mission to promote research, teaching, and learning in the library. Since 1985, the Leab Award of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the American Library Association has recognized the active exhibition and publication program at the Fisher Library by giving merit awards, honourable mentions, and seven wins in the first, second, and third categories for 'excellence in the publication of catalogues and brochures' for exhibitions. Two catalogues have also won Awards for Excellence in Book Design in Canada from the Alcuin Society: *Toronto in Print: A Celebration of 200 Years of the Printing Press in Toronto, 1798-1998* (1998) and most recently, *Women on the Move: An Exhibition of Travel Books* (2024), which was recognized for creating a 'unique reading experience that matches its subject' in the form of a three-part accordion folded catalogue.

Exhibitions create opportunities for public engagement with collections on display. This year alone, we welcomed over thirty thousand visitors who came to see the library and exhibitions, participate in classes or public events, and consult

A Bubble Gum Vending Machine at the Fisher Library?

Well, maybe not one that sells gum — but what if it dispensed small poetry broadsides?

The Toronto Poetry Vendors was both a small press and a mechanical poetry 'journal' which operated out of refurbished gum vending machines. Founded in 2010 by Elisabeth de Mariaffi and Carey Toane and consisting of three permanent machines hidden around Toronto, the journal was produced twice yearly, each issue consisting of ten single, hand-folded broadsides by ten Toronto-based poets. Costing a single toonie for a broadside, the journal continued for five years before folding.

Earlier this year, Toane, now a librarian at the University of Toronto, rescued the last remaining machine from her garage, cleaned it up, and donated it to the library, along with some of the last of the remaining broadsides. This whimsical addition to the Fisher Library's collection challenges traditional ideas of publishing, and shines a light on a quirky, ephemeral project that took place in the Toronto literary scene.

John Shoesmith
Outreach Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

material in the reading rooms. *70 Rare Books, Special Collections, Archives* is an exhibition inspired by moments of discovery and learning in the library. The exhibition and catalogue feature a selection of seventy items from the collections that have been recently used in research, teaching, and learning in the seminar room, reading room, or in library projects and events. The exhibition and catalogue celebrate above all the meaningful connections between people and the library, with the hope that their stories will inspire a new generation of visitors, students, faculty, alumni, and friends to value and spend time with archives, rare books, and special collections.

This exhibition and catalogue are dedicated to RBSC staff, past and present, for all your work and dedication to the library. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Friends of the Fisher Library for their ongoing support of the exhibition program.

David Fernández
Head, Department of Rare Books
and Special Collections
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

راه سرخ

کارگران و زحمتکشان متحد شوید!

شماره ۴ سازمان چریکهای فدائی خلق ایران ـ شاخه آذربایجان چهارشنبه ۳۰ آبانماه ۱۳۵۸ قیمت ۱۵ ریال

سرمقاله

علیه امپریالیسم وسرمایه‌داری وابسته مبارزه کنیم

حملهٔ مسلحانه مأمورین کمیتهٔ مرکزی واوباشان به صف تظاهرات ضدامپریالیستی

حکومتهای سرمایه‌داری نه می‌خواهند ونه می‌توانند مسکن زحمتکشان را تامین نمایند!

چرا شوراهای کارگری نمی‌توانستند انقلابی باشند؟

کاسه صبر بی‌مسکنان تبریز بسر آمد!

مبارزهٔ روستائیان آذربایجان روزبروز گسترش می‌یابد.

کارگران بیکار اردبیل:

نامهٔ یک هوادار: «دروغگویان ضدانقلاب را بشناسیم»

کانون دانش‌آموزان ایران دسیسهٔ جدید حزب توده ـ خائن!!

اخبار از شهرستانها

مردم میهن ما تا قطع کامل سلطهٔ امپریالیسم آمریکا بمبارزات خود ادامه خواهند داد

کارگران و زحمتکشان متحد شوید

کریکاران و زحمتکشان یه‌ک گون

رێگای گەل

ارگان کمیته کردستان سازمان چریکهای فدائی خلق ایران

دوره جدید سال پنجم ـ شماره ۲۹ بهمن ۱۳۶۵ بهاء ۵۰ ریال

اطلاعیه

سازمان چریکهای فدایی خلق ایران بیمناست

قیام وسیاهکل

سازمانیابی مخفی: تریدیونیونیسم و اشاعه پراکندگی در میان کارگران

قطب‌نمای دمکراسی شورائی

جنگ شهرها و تاثیرات آن در ذهنیت توده‌های مردم کردستان

درصفحات دیگر:

اخبار جنبش توده‌ای

اطلاعیه هیات تحریریه

صدای فدائی

۲ ریه ندان و درس آموزی از تجارب تاریخی

هه‌موو میلله‌تێك ماڤی دیاری كردنی چاره‌نوسی خوی هه‌یه

Multiple Voices within Iran's Leftist Movements

The study of a social or political movement is never complete without access to the first-hand materials, voices, and documents preserved in memory institutions. The ways in which these sources are collected, described, and interpreted profoundly shape how the history of an era is written. Recent additions to the holdings of the Fisher Library exemplify this process. Dr. Peyman Vahabzadeh has donated a remarkable collection of materials that shed light on the diverse history of Iran's leftist movements, opening new avenues for researchers, students, and community members to engage with this vital aspect of modern Iranian history.

Dr. Vahabzadeh is Professor of Sociology at the University of Victoria, specializing in social movements, postcolonial studies, and the study of violence and nonviolence. His teaching and research explore how individuals become historical actors and how collective action generates social and cultural renewal. Alongside his scholarly contributions, Dr. Vahabzadeh has published eight books of poetry, fiction, memoirs, and literary criticism, and has produced essays and creative works in multiple languages, including Persian and English. His wide-ranging intellectual interests, bridging the humanities and social sciences, are reflected in his donation to the library: a carefully preserved collection—originally comprising the personal archives of Cosroe Chaqueri (Khosrow Shakeri) (1938–2015), the renowned historian whose vast, meticulously assembled documentary corpus stands as a cornerstone for the study of Iran's socialist and democratic movements—documenting the intellectual and activist history of Iran's leftist movements from the 1940s onward.[1]

Donated in 2025, the collection comprises approximately sixteen hundred individual items representing around 140 unique titles. These materials include journals, pamphlets, posters, underground

LEFT TO RIGHT: *Rāh-i Surkh: Sāzmān-i Chirīk'hā-yi Fadā'ī-i Khalq-i Īrān - Shākhah-i Âzarbāyjān* (The Red Path: Organization of the Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas - Azerbaijani Branch), dated November 21, 1979. • *Rīgāy gal: urgān-i kumītah-i Kurdistān-i Sāzmān-i Chirīk'hā-yi Fadā'ī-i Khalq-i Īrān* (The People's Path: Publication of the Kurdistan Committee of the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas), dated January 1987.

publications, and ephemera produced by various socialist, communist, and student groups active within Iran and in exile. A significant portion of the donation has been integrated into the Robert S. Kenny Collection, the library's expanding archive of international leftist movements. This connection situates the Vahabzadeh donation within a global framework of radical thought and activism, while also preserving the distinct historical experience of the Iranian Left.

Among the most notable titles are *Rāh-i Kārgar* (The Worker's Path), *Rāh-i Surkh* (The Red Path), *Rāh-i Tūdah* (The People's Path), *Firqah-i Dimukrāt-i Âzarbāyjān* (The Azerbaijan Democratic Party), *Kārgar-i Balūch* (Baluch Worker), *Kārgar-i Janub* (Southern Worker), *Kārgar-i Kurd* (Kurdish Worker), *Akṣariyyat: Nashrīyah-i Sāzmān-i Fida'iyān-i Khalq-i Īrān* (Majority: Publication of the Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas), *Aqaliyyat: Nashrīyah-i Sāzmān-i Fida'iyān-i Khalq-i Īrān* (Minority: Publication of the Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas), *Nabard-i Khalq: Urgān-i Sāzmān-i Chirīk'hā-yi Fadā'ī-i Khalq-i Īrān* (People's Struggle: Organ of the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas), and *Kārgar-i Kumūnīst: Urgān-i Ittiḥād-i Mubārizān-i Kumūnīst* (The Communist Worker: Organ of the Union of Communist Militants). The collection also includes student journals, revolutionary posters, and bulletins produced both inside Iran and across the diaspora. The wide linguistic and regional range offers rare documentation of local and transnational voices that shaped Iran's leftist movements across the twentieth century. Researchers can explore the full list of catalogued items through the University of Toronto Libraries online catalogue by searching for the text 'Gift; Peyman Vahabzadeh.'

Understanding a politico-cultural movement requires examining the multiple dimensions of its memory and representation. In this sense, beyond merely expanding the volume of materials on Iran, the Vahabzadeh collection enriches and diversifies the perspectives through which such movements can be studied. The collection invites researchers to examine how various branches of the Iranian left grappled with questions of autonomy, federalism, and democracy, particularly from the perspectives of marginalized or non-Persian regions such as Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Baluchistan, and Ahvaz.

In dominant Iranian political discourse, particularly within state narratives and much of the post-revolutionary public sphere, 'the Left' is often portrayed as a monolithic force associated with the industrial working class or with Marxist-Leninist thought. Yet, as Dr. Vahabzadeh's donation reveals, leftist movements in the country were never ideologically uniform. Rather, the left encompassed multiple, and sometimes competing, movements shaped by local histories, linguistic communities, and regional forms of resistance.

Regional leftist movements were often critical of the mainstream Iranian Left, represented by parties such as *Ḥizb-i Tūdah*, and diverged from it on questions of local autonomy and cultural rights. These movements placed greater emphasis on the 'freedom of peoples and nations,' drawing on Lenin's writings on national self-determination while advocating for cultural autonomy and local governance. This divergence marked a significant distinction between the Tehran-centred Left and the regional Left. The former, influenced by urban intellectual circles and Soviet centralism, often minimized questions of ethnicity and national identity, whereas the latter foregrounded them as integral to social justice and anti-imperial struggle. For regions such as Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, where demands for autonomy and linguistic rights were historically intertwined with class struggle, the leftist discourse naturally evolved into a dialogue between nationalism and socialism. In this regard, the Peyman Vahabzadeh Collection offers a uniquely multilayered archive. Through its journals, manifestos, organizational documents, and pamphlets, scholars can examine the contrasts between the mainstream and regional Left and trace how leftist movements articulated political modernity not only through class and economy but also through culture, language, and regional self-determination. The materials also provide insight into how these movements engaged with broader currents of anti-colonial thought, revolutionary internationalism, and feminist and student activism.

The research potential of the collection is considerable. For historians of modern Iran, it provides first-hand insights into ideological debates within the Iranian Left. For sociologists and political scientists, it creates opportunities to explore the dynamics of social movements, exile politics, and transnational networks. For linguists and cultural historians, it offers valuable examples of multilingual political publishing. The material thus bridges Iranian studies with broader fields such as global leftist history, postcolonial theory, and the study of social movements, which are the very themes central to Dr. Vahabzadeh's own scholarly work.

This donation has not only enriched the holdings of the Fisher Library but has also expanded the possibilities for understanding Iran's complex leftist heritage.

Lale Javanshir
Middle Eastern Studies Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ENDNOTE

1 Peyman Vahabzadeh, "Peyman Vahabzadeh – Department of Sociology, University of Victoria," University of Victoria, accessed October 30, 2025, https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/sociology/faculty-staff/faculty/vahabzadeh-peyman.php.

A Family of the Book: The Hyman Family Collection

One hundred years ago in 1925, Ben Zion Hyman (1891/2–1984) and his wife Fanny opened a bookstore on Spadina Avenue in Toronto. Soon after moving to 412 Spadina Ave., where it would remain until its closing in 1971, the Hymans' Judaica bookstore quickly become a staple of the Jewish community in the Kensington Market neighbourhood.

Ben Zion Hyman was born in a small town in Belarus. On the eve of the First World War and just as he graduated as an electrical engineer in Russia in 1914, Ben Zion left for Canada with his mother and sister, joining his father who was already in Guelph. In Canada, Ben Zion taught Hebrew and attended the University of Toronto, where he once again graduated as an electrical engineer. He continued to teach Hebrew for a time before he and Fanny began selling books out of their rented space in the home of J. B. Salsberg's parents—Salsberg would later become a prominent Communist figure and Labour-Progressive MP—before eventually opening their first store on Spadina Ave.

While Ben Zion collected the books for the store, the business was primarily run by Fanny, according to their grandchildren. In their store, the Hymans sold Judaica books as well as Jewish ritual items such as *mezuzot* and Chanukah menorahs, but they also sold secular Hebrew and Yiddish books, popular English literature, magazines, newspapers, and office supplies. More importantly, the store became a hub for the area's Jewish community, frequented by the local literary crowd as well as ordinary folks. It was a place where people of all political persuasions could visit and discuss politics and current events.[1] The store also served as a small lending library until the Hymans officially founded the Jewish Public Library in 1941. That library was an important institution for the Jewish community of Toronto, though its use eventually declined and it was disbanded in 2008. Another branch of the bookstore was opened in 1953 on Eglinton Avenue West by Ben Zion and Fanny's son Gurion (1925–2017).

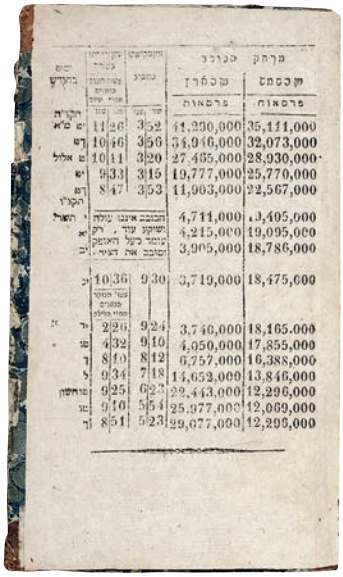
In 2024, Avi Hyman, grandson of Ben Zion and Fanny and son of Gurion, reached out to the Fisher Library and offered to donate books from the Hyman home. This led to multiple visits to a vast library, which, to my surprise, was primarily not material from the store nor from the public library. Instead, almost two hundred volumes of books, which have since been donated to the Fisher Library, came mostly from Ben Zion's personal collection—and many of these are markedly different from the books that filled the shelves of the store and the library.

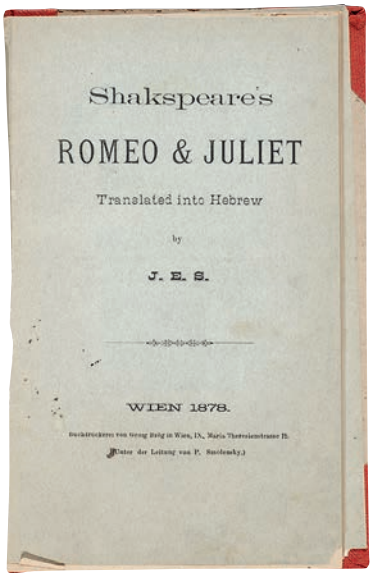
Among the books donated to the Fisher Library, two categories of publications stand out. One is a collection of small pamphlets in English pertaining to the dispute about the Jewish Naturalisation Act of 1753 in England, which allowed Jewish residents to be naturalized, but was repealed the very next year. Another is early modern Hebrew books. Early on, Ben Zion was taken by the *Haskalah* (or Jewish Enlightenment) movement, which emerged in the late eighteenth century. Among its goals was the revival of the Hebrew language for use in secular life and not strictly in religious texts, even before the advent of the modern Zionist movement. While the mostly immigrant community around him spoke and read primarily in Yiddish (with the more established community preferring English), Ben Zion was enthusiastic about Hebrew. Consequently, in his private collection (but not in his store), Ben Zion collected many notable Hebrew books. I will highlight just a few of the important or rare examples, beginning with a few of the stars of the *Haskalah*.

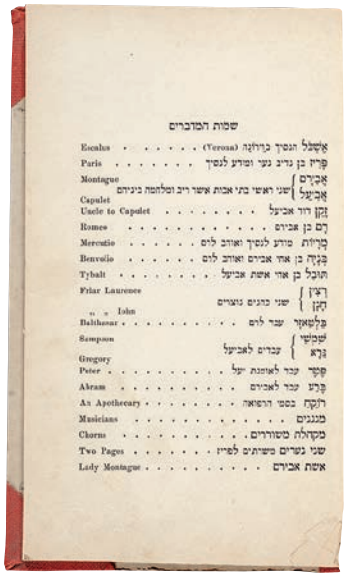
Avraham B. Lebensohn (1794–1878) is considered the first Hebrew poet of the *Haskalah* in Russia. The first volume of his poems, entitled *Shire Śefat Ha-Kodesh* (poems of the holy tongue), published in Leipzig in 1842, was considered a milestone in the revival of Hebrew.

Ḥayyim Selig Slonimski (1810–1904) was a rabbi but also a publisher, astronomer, and scientist in Zhytomyr (then in the Russian Empire, now in Ukraine). One of his goals was to enlighten Jews in the latest scientific knowledge, and when the observation of Halley's Comet in 1835 gave rise to superstitions, he published his book *Kokhva de-shaviṭ*—which focused on astronomy and especially on comets—with

ABOVE: Ben Zion Hyman in the bookstore, 371 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, [c. 1926]. Ontario Jewish Archives, item 1172. **FACING PAGE, FIRST ROW:** First page of Lebensohn's *Shire Śefat Ha-Kodesh*, with the faded book stamp of Ben Zion Hyman. • Calculation of distances of stars from the sun and earth in Ḥayyim Selig Slonimski's *Kokhva de-shaviṭ* (Vilna, 1835). • English title page of *Ram ṿe-Ya'el*, Isaac Edward (Eliezer) Salkinson's translation of *Romeo and Juliet*. • List of characters in *Ram ṿe-Ya'el*. **SECOND ROW:** List of characters and first page of *Teshu'at Yiśra'el bi-yede Yehudit*.







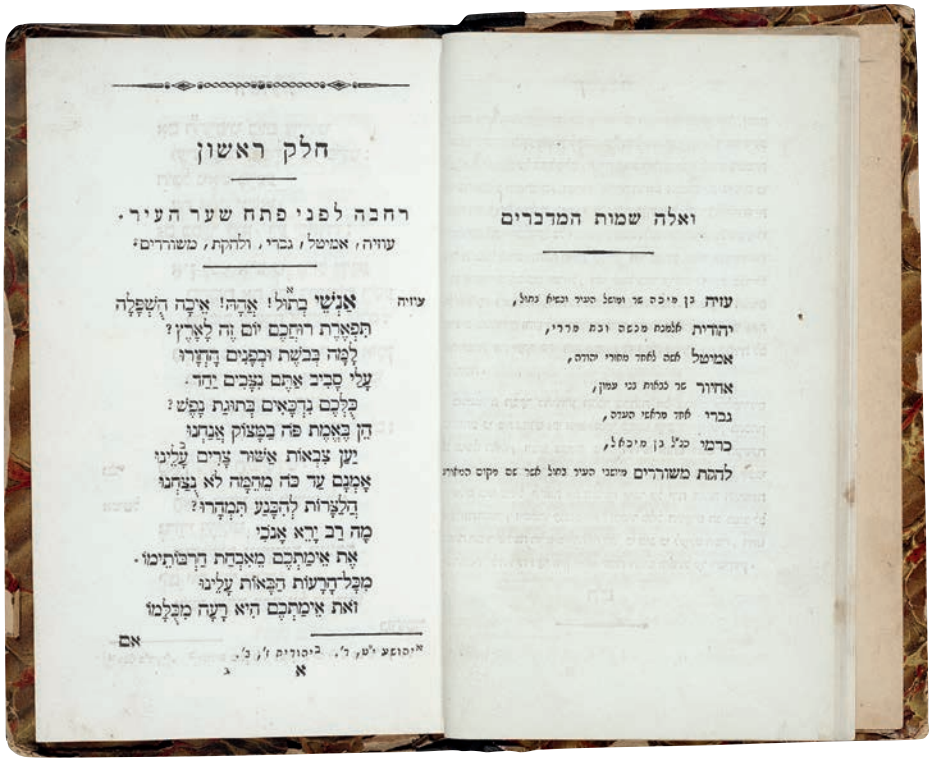
the purpose of rooting out superstitious beliefs tied to them.

Dayid Franko Mindis (1713–1792) was a Jewish poet and playwright in Amsterdam. One of his plays, *Teshu'at Yiśra'el bi-yede Yehudit* (Rödelheim, 1804) is a Hebrew adaptation of a work about the heroine Judith by Italian poet and librettist Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782).

In addition to these notable *maskilic* works, the collection includes the first Hebrew translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. As previously described in *The Halcyon* (No. 70, December 2022), this translation, entitled *Ram ye-Ya'el* and published in Vienna in 1878, is one of the first few works of English literature to be translated into Hebrew, along with Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Shakespeare's *Othello*, all translated by Isaac Edward (Eliezer) Salkinson (1820?–1883).

Another unique book in this collection is entitled *Bat Ruḥamah* and published in Warsaw in 1899. It is a Hebrew translation of a German novel titled *Yaḳobina*, undertaken by Blumah Baynashovits, a woman about whom no biographical information is found. While the translator attributes the original work to Rabbi Meir (Marcus) Lehmann (1831–1890), it was in fact only first published by him in *Der Israelit*, the German Orthodox Jewish newspaper he founded. The actual author was another woman, Sarah Gugenheimer, née Hirsch (1834–1909), daughter of the well-known German Orthodox rabbi, Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888).

This collection shines a light on an aspect of this book-loving family that would not have been apparent in the bookstore nor in the library, and provides a window into a segment of the early twentieth-century Toronto Jewish community. Moreover, it fills some gaps in the Fisher Library's Judaica collections, and we are grateful to the Hyman family for donating these books.



An event was held in December 2025 to celebrate one hundred years of the bookstore along with the donation of the Hyman books.

Nadav Sharon
Jewish Studies Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ENDNOTE

1 *Voices from the Heart: A Community Celebrates 50 Years of Israel,* ed. Bonnie Goldstein and Jaclyn Shulman (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1998), 90–91

Bringing the Mid-Twentieth Century Toronto Jewish Experience to Life: The Shirley Faessler Papers

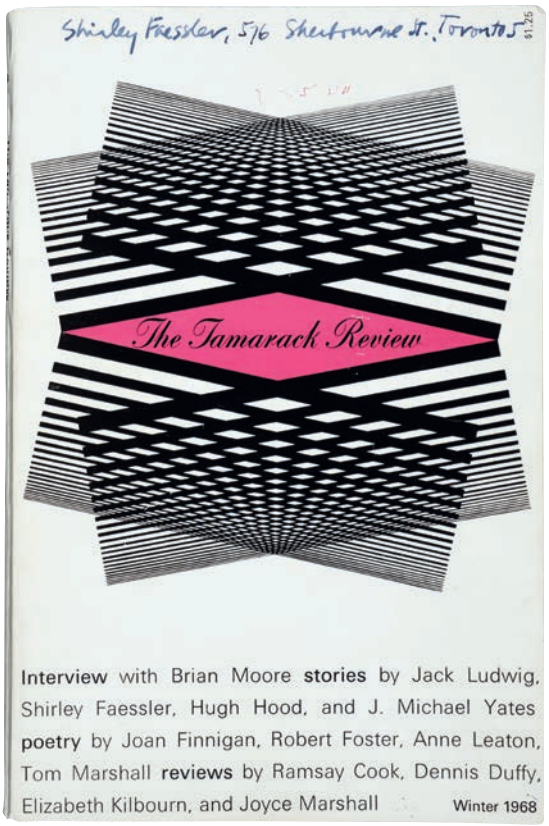
Writer Shirley Faessler (1907–1997), née Rotstein, created complex works that caught the attention of readers, critics, and authors alike. The Fisher Library recently processed a significant donation of her archives, offering insight into her life and work. A glimpse into this archive and her writing corpus quickly reveals her invaluable contribution to the Canadian and, more specifically, the Toronto literary scene.

Throughout her life, Faessler was deeply involved in Toronto's local arts community, cultivating relationships with prominent authors and artists. Her commitment to the cultural scene also extended into her home life, where she presided over a theatrical and artist boarding house at 576 Sherbourne Street. It was there that she met her third husband, actor Jim (James) Edmond (1924–2000). Faessler was known for telling mesmerizing stories around her kitchen table, captivating everyone with her wit, imagery, and sense of humour. These stories, stemming from her childhood and lived experiences, are quintessential Toronto tales that reference landmarks and institutions that still exist. Although she was known for her humorous writing style, she did not shy away from difficult content. Merna Summers of *The Edmonton Journal* wrote: 'Faessler has a gift for comedy, but her writing can also create pain. There are times when she comes almost too close to the bone, when the things she shows us are things that we would rather believe are not true.'[1]

Born into a poor Romanian Jewish immigrant family and raised in the vibrant Kensington Market area of Toronto, Shirley Faessler integrated Yiddish language, humour, and culture into her writing. Though her exact birth year is claimed to be between 1915–1920 depending on the biography, her granddaughter (and the donor of her archives) Karen Hines confirmed it was somewhere closer to 1907. She failed out of grade eight at King Edward Public School, marking the end of her formal education. Though not completely autobiographical, her stories reflect her personal experiences of poverty, marriage, adultery, and immigrant life. Her first book of stories, *A Basket of Apples* (1988), depicts Jewish immigrant life in Kensington Market in the 1920s and 1930s, while her 1979 novel *Everything in the Window* wittily chronicles the world of a young Jewish woman, Sophie, as she attempts to escape her impoverished immigrant childhood. Canadian journalist Robert Fulford, a staunch supporter of Faessler's work, shared in his cover endorsement for *A Basket of Apples* that her 'characters enrich not only our knowledge of Canadian Jews but our feelings for humanity.'[2] Both books feature vibrant characters inspired by the neighbourhood personalities she knew, and offer valuable insights into the relationships between Jewish and non-Jewish communities at the time. The archival material, which includes Faessler's correspondence, drafts, and photographs, provides additional resources to those interested in Yiddish culture and language, and the history of Toronto's Jewish community during the 1920s and 1930s.

What is so remarkable about Faessler's life story is that she began writing professionally later in life, when she was already a grandmother, and only after years of voracious reading and with the encouragement of her friends and husband. In 1967, she published her first piece in *The Atlantic*, a short story titled 'Maybe It Will Come Back to My Mind.' Her work was featured in *The Tamarack Review*, *Saturday Night*, broadcast on the CBC, and appeared in numerous Canadian and American anthologies. 'A Basket of Apples' and 'Lucy & Minnie' were included in the

FACING PAGE: Faessler at her typewriter, where she would exclaim 'Gotcha, you son of a bitch!' **BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Shirley Faessler at the kitchen table of 576 Sherbourne Street in Toronto. • Faessler's copy of the Winter 1968 issue of *The Tamarack Review*, containing her story 'Intercede For Us, Auntie Chayele.'


Shirley Faessler, 576 Sherbourne St. Toronto 5
$1.25
The Tamarack Review
Interview with Brian Moore stories by Jack Ludwig, Shirley Faessler, Hugh Hood, and J. Michael Yates poetry by Joan Finnigan, Robert Foster, Anne Leaton, Tom Marshall reviews by Ramsay Cook, Dennis Duffy, Elizabeth Kilbourn, and Joyce Marshall
Winter 1968

Distinctive Stories category in *The Best American Short Stories,* and manuscripts with revisions and published versions of those stories can be found in box one of the archive. Faessler was open about the difficulties of being a writer, and much of the press coverage for her novel focused on the gruelling seven-year process of writing it. In a November 1979 *Sunday Star* article, she admitted that working on her first novel was agony, and that she used to come downstairs after a day's work and say, 'Gotcha, you son of a bitch! [She] was even talking to her typewriter.'[3] Even though writing took a toll on her, she was hooked and couldn't stop.

Processing this archive was fulfilling and meaningful both professionally and personally. Faessler had a remarkable ability to bring people together and foster connections, and her papers are rich in content and cultural history. Those who knew her felt very connected to her infectious energy, and one can feel this energy through the archive, where her personality and essence come through in her correspondence, notes, and journals. While the archive focuses on Faessler's writing career, it is also filled with anecdotes of her creative, bohemian, and free-spirited personal life. She was an avid traveller, as evidenced by her many trip mementos from Italy, Greece, and Spain. Through reading about Kensington Market's immigrant Jewish community, I felt connected to my own Ashkenazi Jewish identity, and could not help but think that I was gaining new insights into my family's lives in the same neighbourhood during the same period. Through Faessler's stories, a piece of my own family history was brought to life.

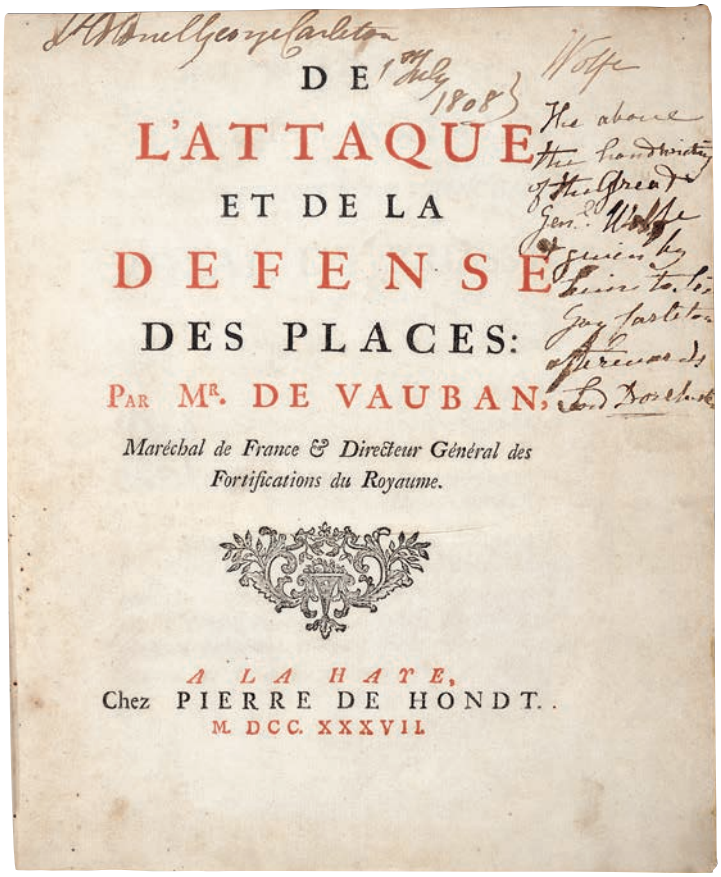
Faessler passed away in March 1997 after a long struggle with dementia. She was surrounded by friends and family during this time, as evidenced by a logbook where visitors would write about their time spent together. Her husband Jim devoted himself to her care during her illness, and in honour of her life he planted a lily garden on Huron Street behind Toronto's Lillian Smith Library. Shirley Faessler's legacy as one of Toronto's prolific writers will live on through her larger-than-life, witty, and sometimes painful stories.

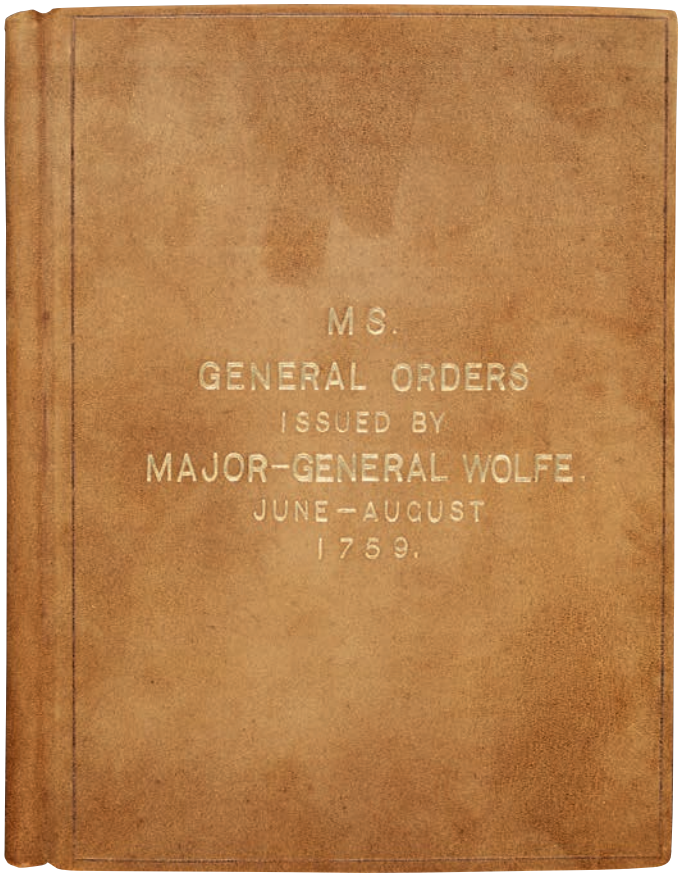
Erez Zobary
Graduate Student Library Assistant
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Read about gifts-in-kind processed in previous tax years on page 3.*

ENDNOTES

1 Merna Summers, "Laughter and Pain in Faessler's Reality," *The Edmonton Journal*, February 2, 1980. (Box 2, Folder 8, Shirley Faessler Papers.)
2 Robert Fulford, cover endorsement for *A Basket of Apples and Other Stories*, by Shirley Faessler (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988). (Box 1, Folder 9, Shirley Faessler Papers.)
3 Olivia Ward, "'Quit Talking,' Friends Said, 'Start Writing,'" *Sunday Star*, November 11, 1979. (Box 2, Folder 8, Shirley Faessler Papers.)





A Wolfe Pack: Three Additions to the Fisher Library's Collections on Major-General James Wolfe

Three additions to the Fisher Library's collections documenting the life and career of Major-General James Wolfe (1727–1759) promise new opportunities for primary source research on a pivotal moment in Canadian history: the siege and eventual capture of Québec City by the British at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham on 13 September 1759. Together with the fall of Montreal in 1760, this campaign led to the creation of Canada as we know it, as the French ceded all but a sliver of their territories in eastern North America to Great Britain as part of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, thus ending the Seven Years' War. But the success of Wolfe's venture against Lieutenant-General Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm (1712–1759) in the summer of 1759 was far from certain, as these new acquisitions demonstrate.

The first two items arrived in December 2023 as part of a gift from Mike McMurrich, whose remarkable collection of significant Canadian and British manuscripts will be profiled in a future issue of *The Halcyon*. When I first met Mike, he immediately showed me his two-volume set of *De l'attaque et de la defense des places* (1737 and 1742) by Sébastien Le Prestre, Marquis of Vauban (1633–1707). Renowned as a source of knowledge on French fortification design and siege warfare, this book narrates its own ownership story. The title page of the first volume is signed 'Wolfe,' under which is written: 'The above the handwriting of the great Gen'l Wolfe + given by him to Sir Guy Carleton afterwards Lord Dorchester.' The volume also contains the armorial bookplate of John Ligonier (1680–1770) and ownership inscriptions by George Carleton (1781–1814), the son of Guy Carleton (1724–1808). The presence of these three figures in the book—Ligonier, Wolfe, and Guy Carleton—show a lineage of ownership that brings us to the fortified walls of Québec.

Ligonier was a Huguenot refugee who joined the British Army in 1702. He distinguished himself during numerous campaigns, including leading a famous cavalry charge at the Battle of Lauffeld in July 1747 during the War of the Austrian Succession. Serving as a Major, Wolfe himself was wounded at this battle.[1] In 1757, Ligonier was named the Commander-in-

LEFT TO RIGHT: Annotations on the title page of this copy of Vauban's *De l'attaque et de la defense des places* (1737–1742) narrate that it was owned by Major-General James Wolfe and passed to his close friend Guy Carleton. • Cover of a set of manuscript orders issued by James Wolfe during the siege of Québec, June–August, 1759.

Chief of the British Army, and it is likely that Wolfe's promise shown in 1747, and subsequently during the raid on Rochefort in 1757 and the surrender of Louisbourg in 1758, ended in Ligonier's recommendation that Wolfe serve as leader of the land forces against Québec. It is easy, if a little fanciful, to imagine Ligonier gifting Wolfe his copy of Vauban's famous guide on the eve of his departure for New France, for what other book could be more helpful for someone contemplating the best mode of attacking or laying siege to French fortifications? Wolfe himself recommended Vauban's book to a young acquaintance desirous of entering the army in a 1756 letter.[2] Another famous book also travelled with Wolfe to New France: his copy of Gray's *An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, copiously annotated, was added to the Fisher Library's collections in 1988. After Wolfe's death at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, his will dictated that his 'books and papers, both here and in England' pass to his friend Guy Carleton.[3] Carleton himself survived a head wound during the battle, and would go on to serve as a key figure in the colonial administration of Canada, including serving twice as Governor of the Province of Quebec (1768–1778 and 1785–1795), and overseeing the evacuation of Loyalist refugees from New York after the American Revolution as Commander in Chief of the British Forces in North America in 1782–1783.

While the copy of *De l'attaque et de la defense des places* may have helped prepare Wolfe for the siege of Québec, a journal by an unidentified officer also gifted by Mike McMurrich gives us a first-hand account of the siege itself. Written during the summer of 1759 while the British were continually bombarding Québec and Wolfe was seeking to goad Montcalm's forces into open combat, the journal begins by summarizing the arrival of transports on the St. Laurence River dated to 4 June, the day that the army departed from Louisbourg to Québec. Near-daily entries follow through to a last, partial, entry of 8 September, just days ahead of the famous concluding battle. The journal acts as a report of daily affairs with occasional thoughts and insertions from its author. Wolfe, famously plagued by indecision on the best manner of attack, instead oversaw a summer defined by constant guerilla warfare and the widespread destruction of civilian homes and farms, but little large-scale offensive action from either side. For example, the journal writer relates a scene dated to 11 August:

•

A working party in front of General Wolfe's camp were attack'd by a party of Indians & Canadians, who killed four & wounded about forty and then retreated, having had only one of their party killed, & two wounded, the latter they carry'd off amongst the killed was one Smyther a favourit Serg't who was shot by a lurking rascale from behind a tree within 10 yards of him; we find in this sort of war, that the Enemy are very dextrous in annoying us, and takeing care of them Selves.

•

Another entry on 23 August records the death of René Portneuf (1707–1759), parish priest at Saint-Joachim, at the hands of the British. The author is obviously horrified by the brutal incident and relates events as follows:

•

This morning the last mentioned village [Saint-Joachim] appear'd in flames; [the author] agreeing more with humanity than the circumstances attending it, for the Parish priest, at the head of the Wretched Peasants makeing a show of defence, to save their habitations were killed, & the Priest scalpt, the sons praying for the father's life & the father for the son[s], were equally heard—the General showed his disapprobation of such inhuman proceedings, by a subsequent order given to Capt'n Goreham ... to spare all, when the opposition he meets with ceases, and concludes that cruelty is the most distinguishing characteristic of cowardice.

•

While the identity of the journal writer is unknown, he must have been an officer or other official, as he records specific details throughout regarding troop actions and movements, numbers of casualties, the presence of deserters, and numbers and placement of artillery.

Our final item lands us in the same timeline and allows for interesting cross-references between the points of view they present. This manuscript dated 1 June to 13 August 1759 records the orders and regulations to the troops issued by Wolfe during this period. Evidently copied down in the field by an officer or aide, among the orders recorded are instructions for conduct and discipline, troop movements and operations, and treatment of civilians; orders regarding provisions and rewards; and records of daily 'parole' passwords toward the end of the manuscript.[4] Orders from Brigadier Generals James Murray, Robert Monckton, and George Townshend are also included. One fascinating point of correlation between the two manuscripts is the Battle of Montmorency on 31 July 1759 (also known as the Battle of Beauport), in which Wolfe's attempt to capture a redoubt at Beauport ended in swift retreat due to heavy casualties, with approximately 210 killed and 230 wounded. One failure of the battle was the premature charge of the company of Grenadiers who began attacking French lines without backup from additional troops still in the process of landing. The cause of this charge has been debated, including the suggestion that, after a month of waiting, the men were too eager to fight. The journal writer is sympathetic to both readings, suggesting that 'from some mistake in a Signal, or to great impetuosity, the Grenadiers advance'd before a proper Disposition was made for the attack or the Battallions were near enough to support them.' Wolfe's order is harsher:

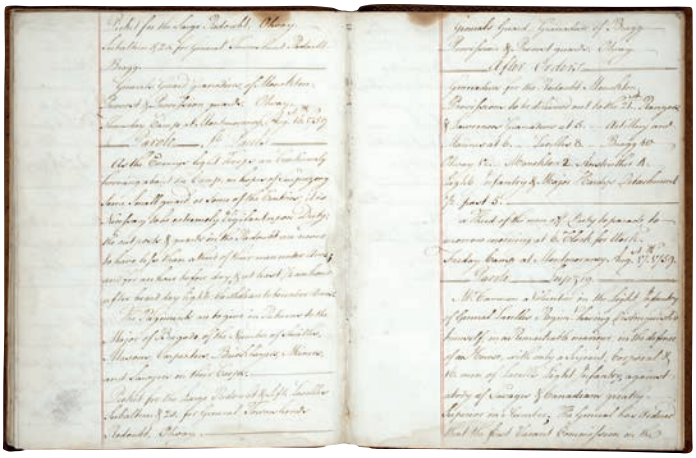
•

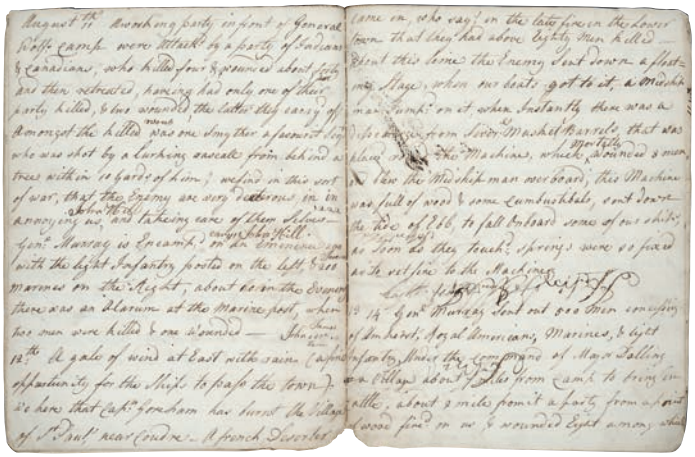
The check which the Grenadiers met with yesterday will (it is hoped) be a lesson to them for the time to Come, Such impetuous Irregular & unsoldierlike proceeding distroys all Order, makes it impossible for the Commanders to form any Disposition for an Attack, and puts it out of the Generals' power to Execute his Plan. The Grenadiers could not Suppose, that they alone could beat the French Army, and therefore it was Necessary, that the Corps under Brigadier Monckton, & Brigadier Townshend should have time to form, that the attack might be General; The very first fire of the Enemy was Sufficient to Repulse Men who had lost all Sense of Order & Military Discipline. ... The loss however is Inconsiderable & may be easily Repaired when a favourable opportunity offers, if the Men will Shew a proper attention to their Officers.

•

Many other orders give a colourful record of daily life in the British camps at Île d'Orléans and Montmorency, such as an order dated 4 July in which 'Paul Pritchard the Sutler ... was Drum'd along the line this day for keeping a disorderly Tent,

LEFT TO RIGHT: Interior of the Wolfe manuscript order book showing entries for 16 and 17 August 1759. The order for 16 August notes that the 'Enemys light Troops are Continuously hovering about the Camps,' necessitating troops 'to be extremely Vigilant upon Duty.' • Interior of the journal of the siege of Québec by an unidentified officer, showing an entry for 11 August 1759 describing the tragic death of a 'favourit' sergeant named Smyther.





& insulting an Officer in the Execution of his Duty.' It continues by noting that 'if found in the Camp [Pritchard] is to be Sent to the provost and there kept in Irons.' The manuscript also contains a version of Wolfe's famous 'Manifesto to the Canadians' in English and French by which he hoped to warn civilians against joining the resistance. Wolfe states that he 'expect[s] the Canadians will take no part in the great Contest between the Two Crowns. But if by a vain obstinacy and Misguided Valour they Presume to appear in arms they must expect the most fatal Consequence.' Many of Wolfe's orders were eventually published in both London (1768) and from the press of Robert Bell in Philadelphia (1778) as *General Wolfe's Instructions to Young Officers*, but this addition to the primary source record of Wolfe's orders presents opportunities to collate with these and other extant manuscript order books to provide a nuanced picture of the lead up to the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.

The manuscript order book arrived in January 2025 thanks to a successful application for a Movable Cultural Property Grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage. We are grateful for the financial assistance the grant provided towards the purchase of the manuscript, which was consigned for sale via William Reese Co. on behalf of the Dietrich American Foundation. The Foundation's founder, H. Richard Dietrich, Jr. (1938–2007) purchased the manuscript from Americana dealer Bruce Gimelson at auction on 29 October 1971. Inscriptions in the manuscript show connections to a prominent military family via George Tancred (1831–1914) whose aunt, Susanna Dalton (1766–1823), was the daughter of Robert Prescott (c. 1726–1815), a General who served in several venues of the Seven Years' War including at Rochefort, Louisbourg, and possibly under Wolfe at Québec.[5] This tempting provenance may reveal clearer connections between the manuscript and Wolfe himself via further research.

Opportunities to add primary sources to the documentary record of the Seven Years' War and the career of James Wolfe are rare. In 2013, the Fisher Library became the home to one of the cornerstones of our Canadian collections: 232 of Wolfe's letters to his parents and other family manuscripts thanks to the generosity of Helmhorst Investments Limited and also the assistance of a Movable Cultural Property Grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage. Donors such as Mike McMurrich and the continued support of the Department of Canadian Heritage have enabled us to continue to add to the Wolfe collections, which will surely inspire new research and interpretations of this tumultuous period of Canadian history.

Grant Hurley
Canadiana Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ENDNOTES

1 Stephen Brumwell, *Paths of Glory: The Life and Death of General James Wolfe* (Bloomsbury, 2006), 62.
2 Quoted in Beckles Willson, *The Life and Letters of James Wolfe* (Heinemann, 1909), 296.
3 Ibid., 483.
4 'Paroles' were used to verify if orders were being successfully transmitted through the ranks: 'Any general who wished to check on whether his orders were being passed on to the soldiers could simply do so by asking a private soldier what the parole was.' From William Wilson, *Historical Narratives of Upper Canada*, accessed October 28, 2025, http://www.uppercanadahistory.ca/wm/wm6.html.
5 "Robert Prescott," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee (Macmillan, 1896), 304.

Science Literacy Week at the Fisher Library

Science Literacy Week is a national celebration that invites Canadians to explore the role of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in shaping our understanding of the world. Each year, the event highlights a specific theme—past ones have included climate, energy, biodiversity, and space—to spark curiosity and connect science to everyday experiences. Libraries, museums, schools, and research institutions host public lectures, interactive exhibits, and hands-on activities.

The Fisher Library has been participating in Science Literacy Week since its first iteration in 2015 when we held an open house of highlights from the history of science collections. This past October, we again held an open house as part of the annual events. This year's broad theme of 'from sea to space' meant books from across the Fisher's extensive science and medicine collections could be included.

On display were several of the most important scientific texts ever printed, including early editions of Euclid's *Elements;* the first edition of *Principia* by Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1727)*;* foundational work in microscopy *Micrographia* by Robert Hooke (1635–1703), and the ground-breaking anatomical text by Andreas Vesalius (1514–1564), *De humani corporis fabrica*. Also featured were works from the Library's Stillman Drake Collection on early astronomy, including the 1566 work on planetary motion *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* by Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543). The display covered scientific works from a range of disciplines from the fourteenth century to the twenty-first, ending with a copy of the first publication of the theory of relativity by Albert Einstein (1879–1955).

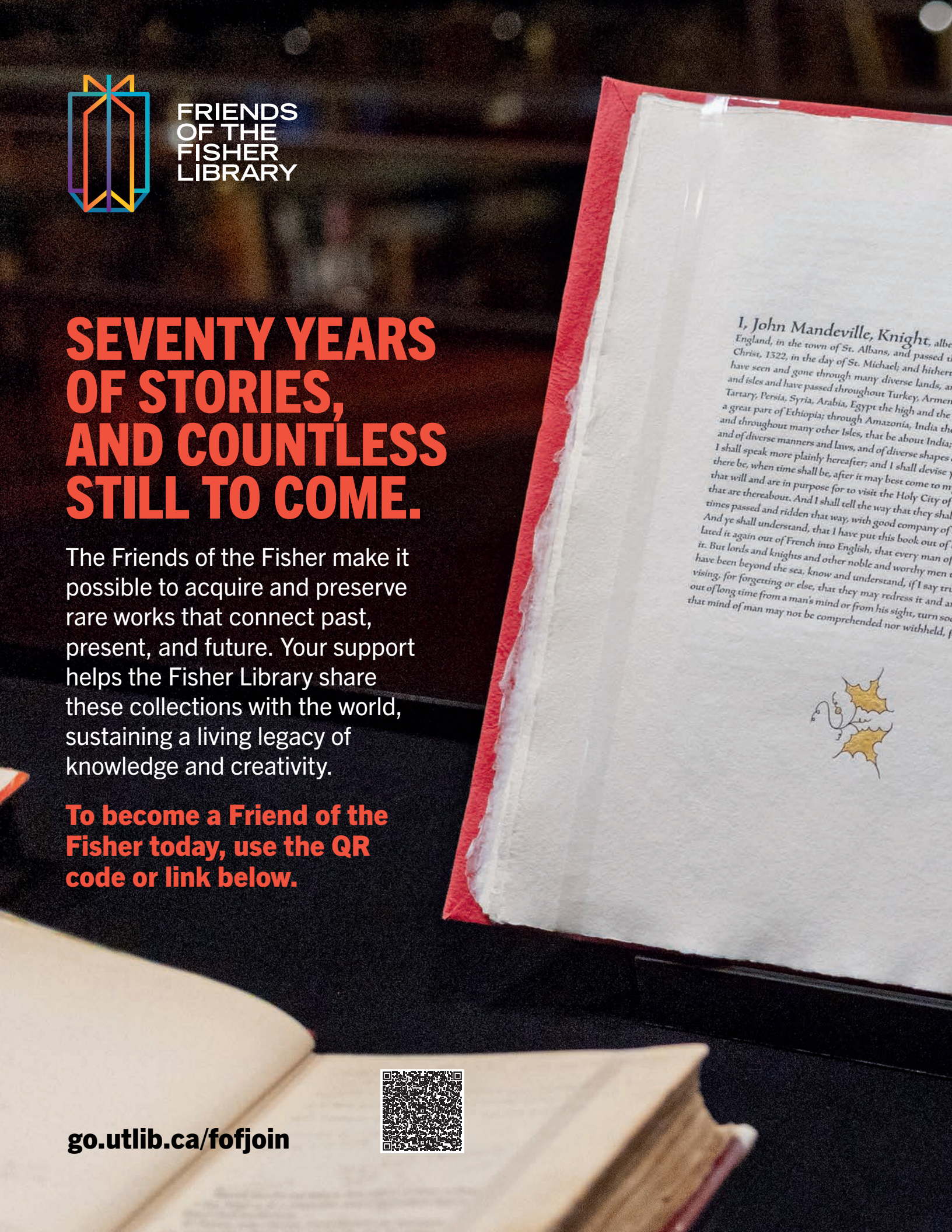
Science Literacy Week presented an opportunity to showcase a significant recent acquisition in the history of science: an uncoloured copy of *New Kreüterbuch*, an herbal by German physician and botanist Leonart Fuchs (1501–1566). One of the most popular Renaissance herbals, the book features woodblock illustrations and descriptions of over five hundred plant species, including several American plants such as pumpkin, chili pepper, snap bean, and maize. The Fisher's new copy, a folio, is attractively bound in contemporary pigskin over bevelled wooden boards. Unusually, the book includes the names and woodcut portraits of not only the artists—Albrecht Meyer (1528–1603) and Heinrich Füllmaurer (active 16th century)—but also the engraver Veit Rudolph Specklin (–1550), offering a rare glimpse into the collaborative process of early scientific book production.

As in previous years, the open house paired early printed books and manuscripts with material from the University Archives and Records Management Services (UTARMS), selected by archivist Chloe Chaitov. This included the records of W. Beverly Scott (1917–2014), previous Curator of Fishes at the Royal Ontario Museum; Helen Sawyer Hogg (1905–1993), Canadian astronomer; and Dr. Harvey Moldofsky (–2025), a specialist on sleep disorders and chronobiology who conducted sleep experiments on the Mir Space Station in the 1990s. The archival materials ranged from notebooks and photographs to the actual headsets used in Moldofsky's research. These materials provided visitors with an opportunity to interact with the variety of formats found in archival fonds and complemented the early books by providing insight into scientific advancements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

This year's open house welcomed over forty visitors eager to engage with the history of scientific disciplines. Attendees had the opportunity to handle rare books and archival documents, interacting directly with primary sources. By highlighting these materials, the Fisher Library and UTARMS bridge gaps between historical scholarship and scientific research, while encouraging public engagement with the history of science.

Alexandra K. Carter
Science & Medicine Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ABOVE: Portraits of the artists and engraver in Leonart Fuchs's *New Kreüterbuch*. Basel: Michael Isingrin, 1543.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it I be not worthy, that was born in
he sea in the year of our Lord Jesu
o been long time over the sea, and
nd many provinces and kingdoms
ia the little and the great; through
low; through Lybia, Chaldea, and
less and the more, a great part;
where dwell many diverse folks,
of men. Of which lands and isles
ou of some part of things that
mind; and specially for them,
Jerusalem and the holy places
hold thither. For I have often
many lords. God be thanked!
Latin into French, and trans-
my nation may understand
hat con Latin but little, and
th or no, and if I err in de-
mend it. For things passed
on into forgetting; because
or the frailty of mankind.

THE LANDS OF ALBANIA AND OF LIBYA. OF THE WISHES FOR WATCHING THE SPARROW-HAWK; AND OF NOAH'S SHIP.

NOW, SINCE I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE OF THE HOLY LAND AND OF THAT COUNTRY AROUND, AND OF MANY WAYS TO GO TO THAT LAND AND TO MOUNT SINAI, AND OF BABYLON THE MORE AND THE LESS, AND TO OTHER PLACES THAT I HAVE SPOKEN BEFORE, NOW IS THE TIME, IF IT LIKE YOU, TO TELL YOU OF THE COUNTRIES AND ISLES AND DIVERSE BEASTS, AND OF DIVERSE FOLK BEYOND THESE COUNTRIES. ¶ For in those countries beyond are many diverse countries and many great kingdoms, that are departed by the four floods that come from terrestrial paradise. For Mesopotamia and the kingdom of Chaldea and Arabia are between the two rivers of Tigris and of Euphrates; and the kingdom of Media and of Persia are between the rivers of Nile and of Tigris; and the kingdom of Syria, whereof I have spoken before, and Palestine and Phoenicia are between Euphrates and the sea Mediterranean, the which sea reaches in length from Morocco, upon the sea of Spain, to the Great Sea, so that it lasts beyond Constantinople three thousand and forty Lombardy leagues. ¶ And toward the sea Ocean in India is the kingdom of Scythia, that is all closed with hills. And after, under Scythia, and from the sea of Caspian to the river of Thainy, is Amazonia, that is the land of Feminye, where no man is, but only all women. And after is Albania, a very large realm; and it is called Albania, because the folk are whiter there than in other countries thereabout: and in that country are hounds so great and so strong, that they assail lions and slay them. And then after is Hircania, Bactria, Hiberia and many other kingdoms. ¶ And between the Red Sea and the sea Ocean, toward the south is the kingdom of Ethiopia and of Libya the higher, the which land of Libya (that is to say, Libya the low) that begins at the sea of Spain from thence where the pillars of Hercules are, and lies against Egypt and toward Ethiopia. In that country of Libya is the sea more high than the land, and it seems that it would cover the earth, and nevertheless yet it passes not his marks. And men see in that country a mountain to which no man comes. In this land of Libya whoso turns toward the east, the shadow of himself is on the right side; and here, in our country, the shadow is on the left side. In that sea of Libya are no fish; for they may not live nor endure for the great heat of the sun, because the water is evermore boiling for the great heat. And many other lands there are that it were too long to tell or to number. But of some parts I shall speak more plainly hereafter. ¶ Whoso will then go

Cairo. Babylon the Great was in Mesopotamia

the first course of Paradise

a term applied in the Levant in the Middle Ages, the Black Sea

Albania is made of three parts: Armenia, Hazaria and Azerbaijan

Japanese Fairy Tales by Kōbunsha Press

Eighteen volumes from the Japanese Fairy Tale Series published by Kōbunsha Press were recently donated to the Fisher Library by Norman Ball. Kōbunsha Press, run by Hasegawa Takejirō (1853–1938), published this series primarily between 1885–1922. Hasegawa brought together writers, translators, and artists to introduce traditional Japanese fairy tales to a global audience. Publication began during the Meiji period (1868–1912), which was a time of rapid societal change and modernization. Until then a largely insular society, this period saw Japan forging greater connections with the rest of the world, particularly in trade. Originally intended to meet a growing domestic demand for English language textbooks, these works gained international attention through Hasegawa's participation in various world fairs, eventually becoming a highly successful and long-running series.

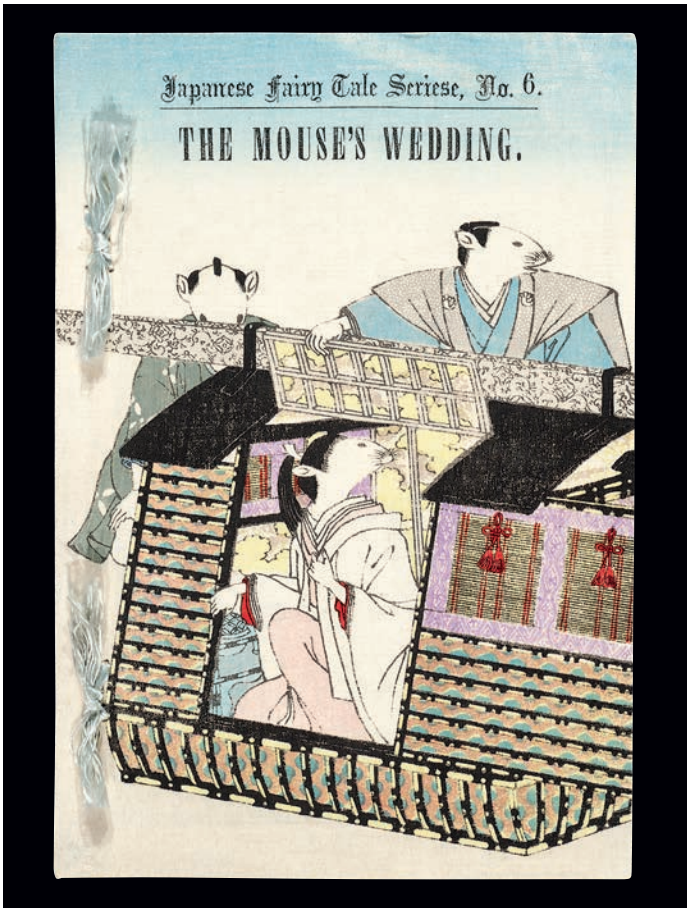
Each volume features an English translation of a fairy tale, along with beautiful colour woodblock illustrations and bound in traditional *fukurotoji* style, where pages are block printed on one side only, folded, and then sewn together. The earliest editions were printed on *mitsumata* paper. Made from the bark of the Edgeworthia plant, *mitsumata* paper is a traditional Japanese *washi* paper with a soft, short fibre, a warm tone, and a weight to the page. Crepe paper, or *chirimen,* was used in later editions as the volumes reached a larger international audience. This form of paper has a distinctive wavy texture and is very soft to the touch, lending the volumes an artistic and antique flair that was particularly appealing to Western markets. Designed with children in mind, these books have become relatively scarce, as delicate papers and young hands do not always mix.

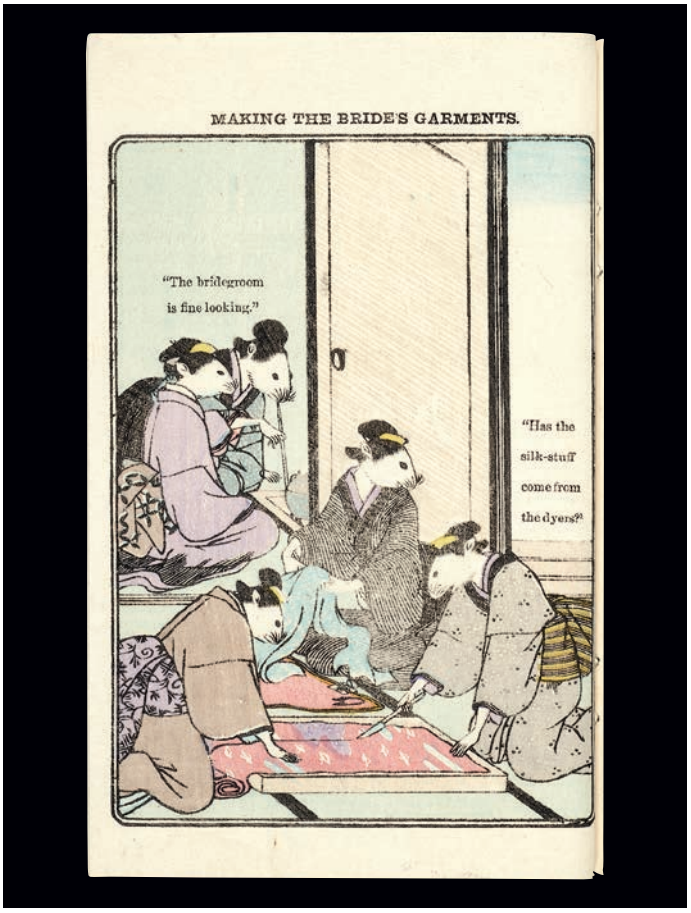
It is easy to see how these stories and vivid illustrations captured the imagination of children both in Japan and abroad. Some tell of evil deeds that end with revenge on the part of the wronged party. In *Kachi kachi yama*, a badger about to be made into dinner instead kills an old woman, assumes her form, and makes her into soup. A passing rabbit hears of this and hatches an elaborate plot of revenge involving the badger carrying burning grass up a mountain, giving him sticking plasters made with hot peppers, and getting him to try to cross a river in a boat made of clay before finally killing him. Other tales are moralistic, such as *Urashima*, in which a fisherman named Urashima releases a turtle he caught back into the ocean. The turtle turns out to be a beautiful woman and daughter of the Sea-God, who was in disguise and testing his moral worth. The 'dragon princess' brings him to live in her palace, but when he wants to return to visit his family, he is given a box and instructed not to look inside it. Upon learning he has been gone for hundreds of years, he opens the box to discover the way back to the palace, only to find a white cloud which, when released, causes him to age hundreds of years and die within moments. Finally, some tales are purely joyful, such as *The Mouse's Wedding*, which simply relates the preparations for the wedding of two mice and their happily ever after.

These volumes are salient symbols of cultural exchange in a period when Japan was increasingly opening itself up to the rest of the world both socially and economically. They also complement the existing volumes of Japanese fairy tales printed on crepe paper already held in the Alfred De Lury fairy tale collection at the Fisher Library.

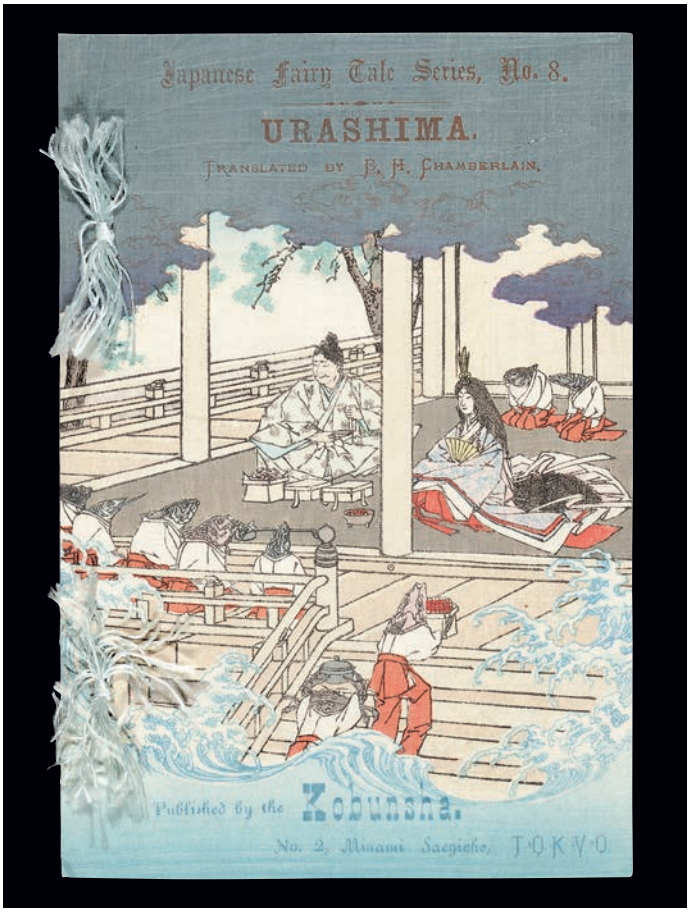
Andrew Stewart
Reading Room Coordinator
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

FACING PAGE, FIRST ROW: *The Mouse's Wedding*. Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1891. **SECOND ROW:** *Kachi kachi yama*. Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1886. • *Urashima*. Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1886.


Japanese Fairy Tale Seriese, No. 6.
THE MOUSE'S WEDDING.


MAKING THE BRIDE'S GARMENTS.
"The bridegroom is fine looking."
"Has the silk-stuff come from the dyers?"

KACHI-KACHI YAMA
Sticking Plasters for Sale


Japanese Fairy Tale Series, No. 8.
URASHIMA.
TRANSLATED BY B. H. CHAMBERLAIN.
Published by the Zobunsha.
No. 2, Minami Saegicho, TOKYO.

EDITORS' NOTE

The Halcyon: The Newsletter of the Friends of The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library is published twice a year in June and December. *The Halcyon* includes short articles on recent noteworthy gifts to and acquisitions of the library, recent or current exhibitions in the library, activities of the Friends, and other short articles about the library's collections.

This issue of *The Halcyon* was edited by Liz Ridolfo, David Fernández, Loryl MacDonald, John Shoesmith, and Maureen Morin, and designed by Maureen Morin.

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Photography by Paul Armstrong, David Fernández, Thomas Guignard, Grant Hurley, Liz Ridolfo, John Shoesmith, and Paul Terefenko.

THE HALCYON

University of Toronto Libraries
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A5

Exhibitions & Events 2026

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition Location and Hours
9–5, Monday–Friday, year round
9–8, Thursdays only, until 23 April 2026
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library
120 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario
Before visiting, please check our website to confirm hours of opening.

19 January to 24 April 2026

Arctic Fever: Image and Narrative in North Circumpolar Voyaging of the Long Nineteenth Century

The Arctic is feverishly topical now because of the pressures of climate change on the north circumpolar ecosystem and its Indigenous communities. The phrase 'Arctic fever', however, arose in the nineteenth century to describe the unquenchable passion for Arctic exploration. The exhibition brings these urgencies together through visual and textual accounts of the circumpolar Arctic in the nineteenth century, including Western discoveries, fictive literature, displays of technology, and descriptions of panoramic spectacles. Ephemera, including newspapers and illustrated playbills, are featured, as are Indigenous perspectives on Arctic travel and life.

Arctic Fever is curated by Mark A. Cheetham, University of Toronto, and Isabelle Gapp, University of Aberdeen.

Summer 2026

Popular Culture in Early Modern English Household Print, 1660–1800

Curated by Dr. Jennifer Mori, University of Toronto

EVENTS 2026 TO BE ANNOUNCED

Events, Friends of Fisher Lectures, Open Houses, Seminars, and Workshops

Please visit the News & Events section of our website and our social media channels for information.

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